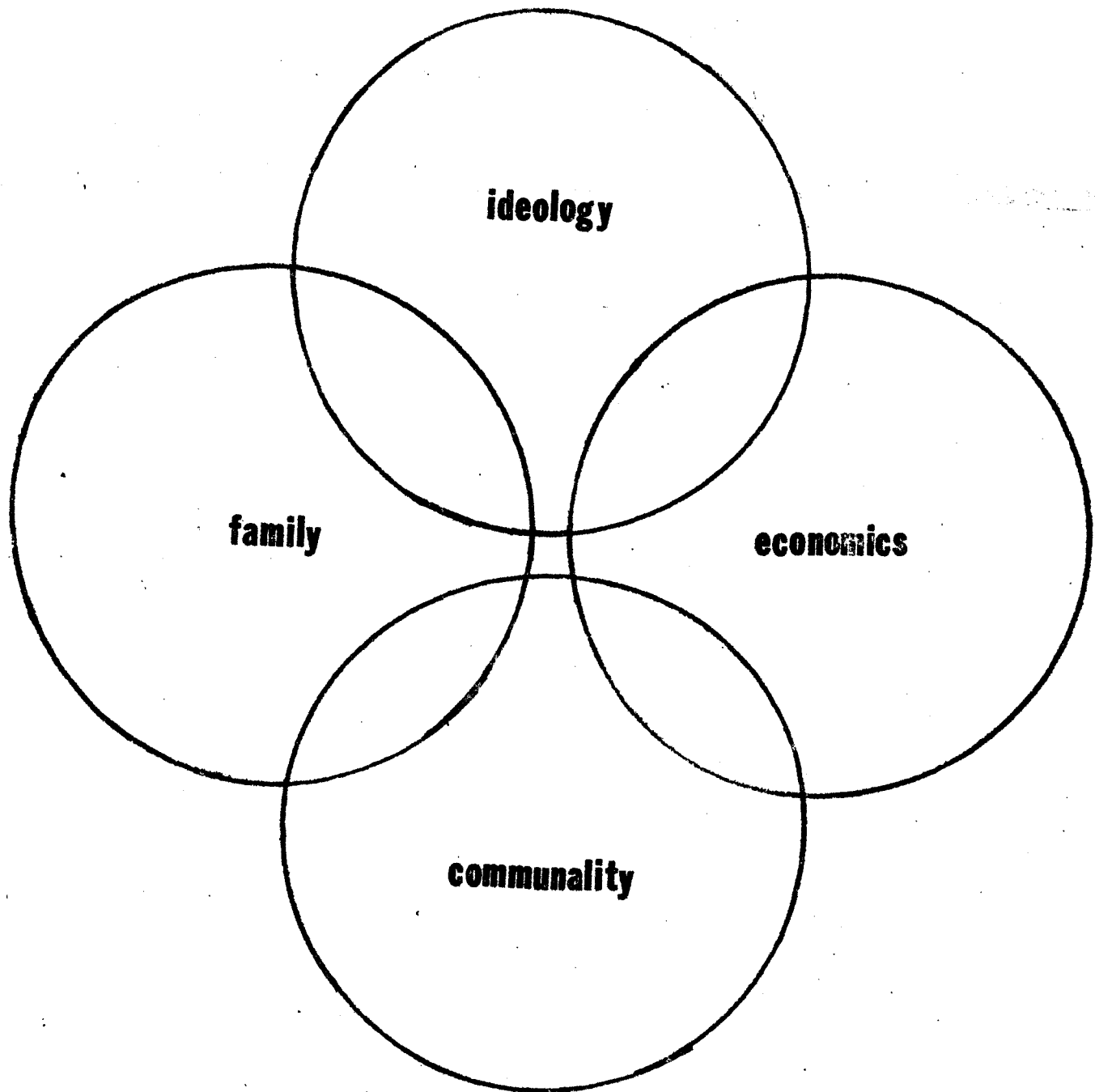


# **jewish collective living**



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## JEWISH COLLECTIVE LIVING

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## INTRODUCTION: CHAVUROT, SDS, AND HAGSHAMA ATZMIT

By Kenneth Bob, Mazkir

One of the most important aspects of education in Habonim is that we do not learn things only for the sake of acquiring knowledge, but we also hope to apply that knowledge to our lives and movement experiences. Looking at the topic of this Winter Seminar and resource booklet, that educational theory holds true. Collective living is one of the central tenants of Habonim and Labor Zionist ideology. Throughout our educational program, Habonim stresses the kvutza, chevra, and ultimately "encourages chalutzic aliya, particularly in group frameworks." That line comes from aim number one in the six "aims of Habonim".

The seminar does not only deal with chalutzic aliya, however, but touches many different types of communal living. This booklet begins with general theory on communal living, discusses attempts in America, presents the case of Jews who have tried collective living in America, and winds up with the Israeli scene. For us to understand the meaning of communal society it is not enough to look only at present day kibbutz. It is worth our while to look a little more closely at other communities, both successes and failure, to try and understand what makes a successful, continuing community. With this knowledge we will be better prepared to decide for ourselves what type of community we are seeking.

While this booklet goes a long way towards presenting diverse material on the topic, it only succeeds in raising some of the important questions. The answers must come from your discussions during and after the seminar, and from further reading. In this brief introduction I would like to throw out a few points for consideration, and perhaps lend a Habonim perspective.

### CAN IT WORK? JEWS IN AMERICA

There are articles in this booklet covering a few different aspects of Jewish collective living in America. The article on Jewish communal farming (page 24) describes their experiences and failures. Why they failed is a research paper in itself, but we can speculate a bit. The times in America were not ripe for farmers, especially immigrants from the urban centers of Russia. Many of these people were not as ideologically motivated, as they were anxious not to settle in New York City. But one of the most interesting points of discussion, for which there is no set answer, is the comparison that can be made between these people and their contemporaries, the chalutzim who went to Palestine. To be sure, most of the early communities set up in Palestine also failed, but a few held on due to tremendous determination, and established the base for the hundreds of kibbutzim and moshavim that exist in Israel today. Some would say that Zionism, adding ideological fervor, spelled the difference for these communities.

The next group of articles raise the same questions in a modern day setting. The new attempts at Jewish communal living in America are embodied in the movement of batim and chavurot. Here the question is two fold: Is this a serious movement, and can such a movement exist in American society? The articles presented here deal with these questions, and with the differences in seriousness between batim (student oriented) and chavurot (non-students for the most part). One point to keep in mind is that outside one summer attempt, all these communities are urban in nature. Even in Israel, where such collective ventures are more socially accepted, urban communes have forced difficult experiences. How much harder it

would be for a Jewish urban commune to have to face not only the realities of being a socialist island in a capitalist world, but also being a Jewish island in a non-Jewish world. Thus we return to some of the same issues raised in connection with the farms of eighty years ago.

#### AIM NUMBER SIX: LIVE THE REVOLUTION

A favorite Habonim catch phrase, but a meaningful one, is Hagshama Atzmit (self-realization). To quote once again from our blue membership card, Habonim strives "to develop within its members the will to realize their own capabilities". We believe that it is not enough to voice an ideology, but a youth movement chaver works to live that ideology. We must learn to combine our personal and political goals. To borrow from another movement, Richard Flacks of the now defunct Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) stated in 1965:

"If I understand what we are trying to work on when we say we are building a "movement," I think it has to do with two types of goals. One, which we might call "existential humanism," is expressed by the desire to change the way we, as individuals, actually live and deal with other people... Second, we say that we seek a radical transformation of the social order. In short, that we act politically because our values cannot be realized in any durable sense without a reconstruction of the political and social system.

I think it is inescapable that our movement must encompass both sets of orientations. It is clear that a politics apart from an existential ethics becomes increasingly manipulative, power-oriented, sacrificial of human lives and soul - it is corrupted. The danger involved in a social movement that is apolitical... is that of irresponsibility: of a search for personally satisfying modes of life while abandoning the possibility of helping others to change theirs; of placing tremendous hope in the immediate community for achieving personal salvation and gratification - then realizing that these possibilities are, after all, limited, and consequently, suffering disillusionment."

Although a member of SDS, a New Left group, expressed this feeling, it evidently was not enough. A major reason for the virtual disappearance of the radical movement in this country is its failure to provide viable alternative communities for its members after college graduation. Calling for a revolution in this country, as valid as that might be, was not accompanied by a noticeable change in life style. Not held together by a community, the "comrades" drifted apart.

Through garinim, (settlement groups), chevrei Habonim have attempted to realize their ideology. An example can be seen in the Garin Gezer Gimmel statement (page 39) which reflects the sentiments of our chaverim already on Gezer, some of whom were also members of SDS. There are no guidelines stating what exact direction this realization must take, and it is ultimately up to the individual and the chevra to define that direction. Perhaps this study of communities will aid in the process.

## COLLECTIVE LIVING

*The following three excerpts come from a primary source for this booklet, Commitment and Community: Communes and Utopias in Sociological Perspective, by Rosabeth Moss Kanter. The book is highly recommended for those wishing further reading on the topic.*

### UTOPIA

*Nothing short of everything will really do.  
Aldous Huxley, Island*

Utopia, represents an ideal of the good, to contrast with the evils and ills of existing societies. The idea of utopia suggests a refuge from the troubles of this world as well as a hope for a better one. Utopian plans are partly an escape, as critics maintain, and partly a new creation, partly a flight from and partly a seeking for; they criticize, challenge, and reject the established order, then depart from it to seek the perfect human existence.

At a number of times in history, groups of people have decided that the ideal can become reality, and they have banded together in communities to bring about the fulfillment of their own utopian aspirations. Generally the idea of utopia has involved a way of life shared with others - and shared in such a way that the benefit of all is ensured. For the most part, the vision of utopia has been a vision of community, as captured in an old Hebrew song: "How good it is for brethren to dwell together in unity."

The ideal of social unity has led to the formation of numerous communes and utopian communities. These are voluntary, value-based, communal social orders. Because members choose to join and choose to remain, conformity within the community is based on commitment - on the individual's own desire to obey its rules - rather than on force or coercion. Members are controlled by the entire membership or by individuals they respect within the community rather than by outside agents or political forces. A commune seeks self-determination, often making its own laws and refusing to obey some of those set by the larger society. It is identifiable as an entity, having both physical and social boundaries, for it has a physical location and a way of distinguishing between members and nonmembers. It intentionally implements a set of values, having been planned in order to bring about the attainment of certain ideals, and its operating decisions are made in terms of those values. Its primary end is an existence that matches the ideals. All other goals are secondary and related to ends involving harmony, brotherhood, mutual support, and value expression. These ideals give rise to the key communal arrangement, the sharing of resources and finances.

The utopian community may also be a centralized, coordinating organization, often combining all of life's functions under one roof. Economic, political, social, and family life may all occur within the community and be coordinated by it. The community may be at the same time a domestic unit (large, extended family), a production unit (farm or business), a political order (village or town), and a religious institution. Unlike the larger society, all these functions are concentrated in one visible entity. And unlike monastic orders, which may serve the interests of a wider church community, or businesses, which are concerned with the interests of the market or of absentee owners such as stockholders, the commune operates to serve first and foremost its own members; any benefits it provides for the outside are generally secondary and based on the need to support its own.

Finally, relations among members of the community are more important than are relations of members or the community to the outside world. For example, in the typical nonutopian, noncommunal organization, such as a business, the nature of the work may determine who becomes a member, whereas in the utopian community the nature of the people who are already members may determine what kind of work is performed. Maintaining the sense of group solidarity is as important as meeting specific goals.

From this definition it appears that a utopian community may have something in common with a family or primary group, with an organization, with a geographically defined community, and with a complete society, even though it differs from all of these. It can be as small as a family of six or seven members, like many contemporary communes, or as large as a village of a thousand or more, like some utopian communities of the past.

### THE PROBLEM: PEOPLE

The primary issue with which a utopian community must cope in order to have the strength and solidarity to endure is its human organization: how people arrange to do the work that the community needs to survive as a group, and how the group in turn manages to satisfy and involve its members over a long period of time. The idealized version of communal life must be meshed with the reality of the work to be done in a community, involving difficult problems of social organization. In utopia, for instance, who takes out the garbage?

The organizational problems with which utopian communities must grapple break down into several categories:

- How to get the work done, but without coercion
- How to ensure that decisions are made, but to everyone's satisfaction
- How to build close, fulfilling relationships, but without exclusiveness
- How to choose and socialize new members
- How to include a degree of autonomy, individual uniqueness, and even deviance
- How to ensure agreement and shared perception around community functioning and values.

These issues can be summarized as one of commitment; that is, they reflect how members become committed to the community's work, to its values, and to each other, and how much of their former independence they are willing to suspend in the interests of the group. Committed members work hard, participate actively, derive love and affection from the communal group, and believe strongly in what the group stands for.

For communes, the problem of commitment is crucial. Since the community represents an attempt to establish an ideal social order within the larger society, it must vie with the outside for the members' loyalties. It must ensure high member involvement despite external competition without sacrificing its distinctiveness or ideals. It must often contravene the earlier socialization of its members in securing obedience to new demands. It must calm internal dissension in order to present a united front to the world. The problem of securing total and complete commitment is central.

## THE ISSUE OF RELEVANCE: COMMUNES AND KIBBUTZ

A major criticism of communes deals with their social significance and relevance. The issue concerns the relevance of utopian communities to the rest of society, and the number of people for whom they actually provide an alternative. Historically, most communal groups have maintained strong boundaries and have been concerned almost exclusively with life inside the community rather than with the outer world. For this reason many people consider utopias to be escapist or withdrawal movements, and many even accuse commune members of evading their social responsibilities. By retiring from established society, they are doing nothing to correct the problems which afflict that society.

Although this tendency may have been true of communities of the past, it is probably less true of present-day attempts. Synanon manifests great social concern and in fact, by virtue of establishing a strongly bounded community, a "monastic" enclave within the urban jungle, it may be serving a very vital function for America by helping large numbers of drug addicts who are not helped elsewhere. The Shakers have always provided a home for orphans. Other utopian communities address themselves to important social problems as well. Camp Hill Village cares for the mentally retarded; Kolonias, New Communities, Inc., in Southwest Georgia, and other rural cooperative communities devote themselves to problems of rural poverty. In many ways the intense love and care, the close coordination of production and consumption, the participation in and sharing of power, the integration of home and work, and the elimination of private property often characteristic of fully developed utopian communities make them well suited to attacking problems of therapy, of integration and incorporation of minority groups and women, and of poverty. The stress on cooperation and self-help makes the communal venture a good setting for grass-roots social change - change from the bottom of society up, change that operates by people organizing themselves.

Menachem Rosner pointed out that one of the differences between the Israeli kibbutzim and many utopian communities in the United States is that the kibbutz movement does not remain isolated from the rest of Israeli society. Martin Buber considered this one of the great strengths of the kibbutz movement, and in his book on utopia he referred to the kibbutz as "an experiment that did not fail." The fact that over two hundred kibbutzim, though varying in ideological persuasions, have joined together in the Kibbutz Federation gives the movement the power of numbers and organization, which increases its significance as an alternative institution in a way not possible for isolated communal ventures. At one time about a third of the members of Knesset, the Israeli parliament, came from kibbutzim, so that the movement also had political significance. It is possible, therefore, that if communal ventures can combine into politically and socially significant units, they may have the potential to bring about social reform and to perform valuable change functions for the rest of society.

Yet it is still true that up to the present, American communes have not done much to change the society at large. For their members they may provide an intensely participatory group in which power is equitably shared, but they do not affect the power structure of the surrounding society. Internally they may become totally cooperative or socialist, effecting a truly equitable distribution of goods, but still do nothing to change the inequitable resource allocation and income distribution in American society. They may offer intensely loving relationships within a small group, but they do not erase the hatred, violence, and conflict



between peoples that exist outside their boundaries. They have contributed to culture (the Shaker songs, dances, and crafts) but not to politics. Like Koinonia, communes are generally isolated havens of peace and cooperation. Utopians would argue that their usefulness is as a model for others, and that by building the kinds of relations they value among a small number of people, they prove to the rest of the world that utopia is possible. When the rest of society comes to recognize the worth of the communal model and begins to adopt its practices, utopians argue, the macro-institutions of society will indeed change.

WANDERERS YESTERDAY, WANDERERS TODAY;  
THE OLD SEARCH FOR A NEW LIFE STYLE

Communes and Kibbutz: A Comparison  
by Muki Tsur

The development of communes in America today calls for a comparison between the kibbutz movement in Israel and the commune. There are those who see the commune as a very different phenomenon from the kibbutz while others consider it to be a development which parallels that of the kibbutz. Neither view adequately analyzes the actual differences or similarities between the two respective societies in which the commune and kibbutz function, and therefore, fails to establish a valid comparison.

The commune in contemporary America is a new happening, distinct from the religious communes of early America. Contemporary communes are societies in the making, their future character as yet undetermined. Any attempt to define them will be inadequate because of their embryonic stage of development. In many respects it is unfair to attempt a comparison between the present-day kibbutz and the commune - one is old; the other is new. It would be more valid to compare and determine what the original kibbutz had in common with the present-day commune.

Results of Ideological Motivation

Both the kibbutz and commune are results of ideological motivation. It may be said that both arose as an expression of revolt against existing social conditions. Their founders expressed growing feelings of alienation from their own societies and a sense of urgency in founding a new social environment. The founders of both the kibbutz and the commune were survivors of political movements which surrendered or were crushed by circumstances.

The ideology of a radical, new society was not popularly held by many of the early founders of the kibbutz. Most of those among the early groups of settlers who came to Israel from 1905-1914 and founded the communes and kvutzot were ready to give up their utopian dreams or be content with expressions of despair and alienation. There was a basic difference between the commune of those times and the kvutza. The former consisted of a group of three to twelve individual's who worked as a group or separately, did not hold ownership of the means of production, but consumed collectively. In the kvutza the communal life was not only based in consumption, but the workers owned and were responsible for production as well. Production was also organized communally. Both types of collectives exist today in the commune scene in America.

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*This article is taken from the booklet, What Is Kibbutz?, written by Muki Tsur and published by the Federation of Kibbutzim in Israel.*

Economically, neither the early kibbutz nor the present day commune was self-sufficient. Both received financial aid and both strived to maintain their independence.

In the commune of today, as in the original kibbutzim, the members are students and intellectuals who identify with oppressed and working people.

In both the kibbutz and commune, the problems of the second generation, education, and the roles of men and women were and still remain crucial problems, all prone to radical solutions.

#### New Form Of Human Relationship

The creation of a new form of human relationship was the primary goal of some kibbutzim, while the creation of a new social order was at the center of others. Some considered their main task to be the education of a new type of person, while others considered the political aim as primary. Tension between these two centers shaped the ideological development of the kibbutz, a tension that is present significantly in the communes in America today.

Wide differences exist between the American communes and the Israeli kibbutz. The nature of both respective countries provides a basic reason for these differences. The kibbutz was formed in a developing country - in a country which could not be built economically without extraordinary effort. The ideology behind this developing economy was a thorough-going socialism which included control of the methods of production as well as distribution. On the other hand, the American commune was established in a country which had a most advanced system of production. The commune in America was conceived of as a revolt against a consumer society, and hence, the value of work to produce goods was questioned in many communes. This is in sharp contrast to the socialist notion of work and production: the workers are persons who have successfully overcome alienation by participating in the means as well as results of their labor.

Another difference between the kibbutz and commune is in the attitude of the rest of the community toward them. The early settlers of the kibbutz were pioneers who had the moral support of the entire community. Politically, they were centers for the Jewish community because they represented islands of Jewish sovereignty. The American communes, on the other hand, find little sympathy from outsiders and frequently are paralyzed by deep hostility and suspicion which threaten their continued existence as independent entities.

#### Different Reasons For Search

The kibbutzim were built by people who were refugees, many of whom had fled religious and political oppression. To them, kibbutz was not only a spiritual refuge or political instrument, but a home. They were prepared to resolve the problems of education, death, and illness, within the framework of the community. From a tradition of wandering in exile, they had come home. The communes, on the other hand, were created by people dissatisfied with the security represented by home. They were seeking a new stage of wandering. The commune served as a means of striving for a new life experience, without the trappings of bourgeois security and stability.

Many of the problems facing the kibbutz are a direct consequence of its attempt to offer a life-long home for its members. Many decisions to depart from the original model and format are a result of the natural development of the kibbutz society, one that now can look back on several generations, and which today exists within a wealthier society with highly developed means of production.

The communes have as yet been unable to determine whether they are an experimental society which serve as a temporary life experience to transient members, or as a permanent society intended to take responsibility for the life-span of its people. The kibbutz itself went through a stage in which it had to make similar decisions. The first kibbutz was not based on the idea of home. After the second year, members had to decide whether to leave it or to remain. The decision to remain in the kibbutz was perhaps no less decisive than the one to live communally. Large numbers who entered the kibbutz movement left after a short time. Thousands have passed through the kibbutz while relatively few have remained. Yet the kibbutz was and remains determined to build a permanent structure, based on the values of equality, freedom and democracy. What the basis will be for the future of the communes remains to be seen.

AMERICA IS A UTOPIA  
by Keith Melville

To Europeans during the Reformation era, the American colonies held the hope of an earthly paradise. On this virgin land they would return to the essentials, make a new beginning, and work toward the regeneration of the world. Ever since, America has been a haven for idealists of every brand, as well as for adventurers and avoiders leaving unfinished business behind in hope of a better life. The remnants of this idealism are scattered throughout the land: New Haven, Connecticut; Equity and Utopia, Ohio; New Hope, Pennsylvania. In a very literal sense, the American continent represented the New World. Alfonso Reyes, the Mexican statesman, is only one of the observers who has remarked that, in his words, "America is a utopia.....it is the name of a human hope."

In this country, more than in any of the European nations, the utopian urge has frequently taken the form of small intentional communities. If America itself became something less than a utopia, then the solution was to detach oneself from the mainstream of the society and to band together with a small group of like-minded idealists to test some notion of the perfect society. During the eighteenth century, there was a series of experiments in communal living - the Labadists in Bohemia Manor, Maryland, the Ephrata colony in Pennsylvania, and the early Shaker villages, to name only a few. But compared with what followed, these were only bare beginnings. Both Owen and New Harmony were very much of their time, part of the ferment of nineteenth-century utopian thinking which attracted the eminent, such as Bronson Alcott, Horace Greeley, William H. Channing, and Nathaniel Hawthorne, as well as the unknown. During the first half of the century more than one hundred experimental colonies were started; in the second half of the century there were fifty more. This was a widespread movement which involved at least ten thousand men, women, and children.

For all the differences between these communal experiments of the nineteenth century and the communes of the counter culture, there are a number of fascinating parallels which make it worthwhile to glance back briefly before examining what is happening today.

#### Destroying Institutional Furniture

Of all the attractions of the new continent, potentiality was its most alluring characteristic. In most societies, the institutional furniture is so thoroughly arranged that, short of the revolutionary task of destroy-

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*This article on American communes is taken from the book, Communes In The Counter Culture, by Keith Melville.*

ing it all, there is an overwhelming sense that not much can be done, that - for better or for worse - all the important questions have already been answered. In the American colonies, and later on the frontier, there was the exhilarating feeling of making new institutions, of participating in the construction of a new society from the ground up. Most of the experimental communities were formed on the frontier in the early nineteenth century, in western New York, Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois. But even though these communities were located on the frontier, this was no frontier movement. Rather than people spontaneously banding together into communal groups in order to survive, as the Pilgrims at Plymouth had resorted to communism for reasons of expediency, this was a thoroughly idealistic movement. Communitarian ideas were planted in the East; most of the propaganda came from Boston and New York. Most of the communitarians were uprooted Easterners, middle-class idealists moving west for the land, freedom, and seclusion necessary for these experiments. Along with George Ripley, founder of Brook Farm, which was one of the exceptional groups located in the East, they hoped that "an association which would create but little sensation in the East might produce an immense effect in the West," still unformed and full of utopian potential.

If these groups attracted retreatists interested mainly in the security of small socialist colonies, the loudest voices were those of zealous reformers, men possessed with the mission of restoring the earthly paradise. For example, Robert Owen and his Declaration of Mental Independence at New Harmony: ". . . with these Great Truths before us, with the practice of the social system, as soon as it shall be well understood among us, our principles will, I trust, spread from Community to Community, from State to State, from Continent to Continent, until this system and these truths shall overshadow the whole earth, shedding fragrance and abundance, intelligence and happiness, upon all the sons of men." Such were the promises of New Harmony, the remodeling of society, and the remaking of the moral order.

But why the unprecedented interest in communitarian experiments during this period of the nineteenth century? The availability of the frontier is only part of the answer. There had been a frontier in the eighteenth century, after all, and only a handful of communal groups. A.E. Bestor, the most perceptive historian of the communitarian movement, has pointed out that one unifying theme among all these communities was the belief that a small experimental community could be used as a means of effecting radical reform. By the beginning of the nineteenth century, the individualist notion that the evils of the world have their source in some defect of human nature had eroded in favor of an alternative explanation, that evil resides in the social organizations which shape individual consciousness. Therefore, any effective reform must change those social forms. The convulsions caused by industrialization were so rapid and extensive that gradual reform was futile. But the prospect of effecting radical change through revolution was even bleaker in the wake of the European revolutionary experiences between 1789 and 1815.

The alternative to revolution was to form intentional communities that embodied radically new ideas. It promised radical and immediate change, if only within the confines of a small community, without the costs of revolution.

## Christian Communism and Social Reform

Some of the communes of the nineteenth century were products of the tradition that most of the earlier experiments had grown out of Christian communism. "And all that believed were together, and had all things in common; and sold their possessions and goods and parted them to all men, as every man had need . . . and did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart." Several of these groups, such as the Rappites and the Zoarites, were isolated experiments which attracted many foreigners. More influential than any of the other sectarian groups, the Shakers established about a dozen new villages in the early 1800's and were important in spreading the communitarian ideals. Then, as the Shakers shifted their attentions from theology to social reform, they helped to bridge the differences between the religious socialism of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and the secular socialism of the nineteenth.

With the two great movements of communitarian excitement in the last century, as with so much else in the American tradition, we imported our ideas and put them to the test of Yankee practicality. The first of these was the Owenite movement which began in the 1820's, the second the Fourierist movement twenty years later.

Robert Owen, the British industrialist, and Charles Fourier, the French social reformer, were contemporaries. Both thought that the huge cities growing around industrial areas were inimical to human happiness. The alternative for Owen was a small, self-contained community consisting of between 800 and 1200 people, for Fourier a phalanx to contain between 1600 and 1800 individuals. Fourier shared Owen's conviction that "character is universally formed for and not by the individual," and that within these carefully conceived communities man would naturally become a more perfect creature. Owen revived a practice of the Italian Renaissance, another age of great optimism about human nature, in designing a large architectural model of what his ideal community should look like, a hollow square one thousand feet long housing an academy, a chapel, ballrooms, and living quarters, equipped with all the modern conveniences. While Owen embraced technology, many of the communities of the next thirty years rejected it. Of all the religious sects, only the Oneida community encouraged the use of technology. While almost all of these communities involved some form of communism - modified by Fourier to the joint-stock principle - there was much more emphasis on psychological and moral values than on economic systems. Most agreed with Ripley about the dignity of work in every form and the desirability of combining the thinker and the worker in the same individual. Most shared Brook Farm's reflexive socialism: the belief in joint ownership and equal reward, in moderating earning and spending and working. All in order to "permit a more wholesome and simple life," to encourage the simple pleasures of personal relations.

The extravagant hopes and the disappointing reality of Owen's New Harmony community were fairly typical of the experiences of these groups in the decades between Owen's arrival in 1825 and the subsiding of the Fourierist enthusiasm in 1846. Arriving in America, Owen had for an audience such distinguished statesmen as Jefferson and Madison, President John Quincy Adams, several members of the Cabinet, the members of the Supreme Court, and the Congress. Finally, after one hundred triumphant days of discourses on the

benefits of communitarian living, Owen was convinced that "the whole of this country is ready to commence a new empire upon the principle of public property and to discard private property and the uncharitable notion that man can form his own character as the foundation and root of all evil." In the course of his public lectures, Owen had invited "the industrious and well disposed of all nations" to New Harmony, and within six weeks after its founding it had a population of eight hundred persons. Evidently a few of these people were something less than "industrious and well disposed." Owen's son described the population as a "heterogeneous collection of radical, enthusiastic devotees to principle, honest latitudinarians and lazy theorists, with a sprinkling of unprincipled sharpers thrown in." Everything considered, New Harmony had a better chance to succeed than did most of the other experiments which followed. Aside from Owen's galvanizing rhetoric, his abilities as a leader, and his financial backing, New Harmony had a ready-built village surrounded by twenty thousand acres of land which had been cultivated by the previous owners, the Rappites. But partly owing to Owen's periodic absences from the community as well as fundamental differences among the community members, serious problems arose within the first few months. Owen dealt with recurrent economic crises by continuing to pour more money into the venture. But there was very little that could be done about internal fissures other than to run through one constitution after another, a total of five in the first year. Within a few more months, the community had split into four discordant groups.

But the general enthusiasm about communitarian experiments was undampened by such disappointments. In the five years following the publication of Albert Brisbane's Social Destiny of Man in 1840, more than two dozen Fourierist phalanxes were started. During the same period, dozens of other communities were founded, ranging from the Brotherhood of the New Life, the first of a series of Spiritualist communities, to the Harmonial Vegetarian Society in Harmony Springs, Arkansas.

#### Charisma, Perfectionists

One of these experiments, the Oneida community, initiated a series of radical reforms, which, for all their originality, were still variations on the characteristic communitarian themes of the period. Like many of the other communal groups, the Perfectionists at Oneida gathered around the imposing figure of a strong leader. John Humphrey Noyes, the community's founder and leader for more than thirty years, combined an infectious idealism and practical intelligence. Under Noyes' leadership, the community had its root in Perfectionism, a radical Christian belief which taught that the Second Coming of Christ happened in A.D. 70, and that in the period since then everything had been ready for the perfection of man. Thus by making one ingenious theological twist, the Perfectionists escaped from the brooding pessimism of the Puritan conception of man into sanguine hopefulness. While the Perfectionist belief was no guarantee of virtue, it raised the possibility that through personal exertion guided by the ideals of Christianity man could realize his own divinity. Each aspect of community life at Oneida was designed with this task in mind.

Noyes advocated a radical Christianity. As a young man in his mid-twenties, he renounced any allegiance to the United States government in a letter to William Lloyd Garrison:



I have renounced active co-operation with the oppressor on whose territories I live; now I would find a way to put an end to his oppression. . . . I cannot attempt to reform him, because I am forbidden to cast pearls before swine. I must therefore either consent to remain a slave till God removes the tyrant, or I must commence war upon him, by a declaration of independence and other weapons suitable to the character of a son of God. . . . My hope of the millennium begins where Dr. Beecher's expires - at the overthrow of this nation.

Like many other communities, the Perfectionists practiced a form of communism that reflected a social ideal more than an economic necessity. Their goal was to form a family of the whole, to dissolve the nuclear family in favor of a larger partnership held together by the same forces that bind people together in marriage. The Perfectionists abolished private ownership and substituted joint ownership of property and equal distribution of all goods. The most radical innovation that the community made was to extend this principle of communism to people as well as material goods. As a consequence, the Perfectionists replaced conventional marriage with complex marriage.

Under this system of complex marriage, the community as a whole was the economic unit, and any man and woman in the group could freely cohabit after obtaining each other's consent through an intermediary. But there was a sharp distinction between the delights of casual or "amative" intercourse and the responsibilities of "propagative" intercourse. Always an intensely practical man, Noyes devoted an entire volume to the practice of male continence in "amative" intercourse. (Evidently the system worked very effectively. The records of the community show that only about a dozen accidental conceptions occurred during a period of more than two decades.) The participants in "propagative" intercourse were carefully chosen to produce children with superior spiritual and physical inheritances. Predictably, despite the Biblical authorities that Noyes cited in explaining group marriage, it, more than any of his other reforms, aroused the indignation of outsiders. The Perfectionists had come to Oneida after being chased out of Putney, Vermont. And even in Oneida, where they were generally respected for their industry and their craftsmanship, Noyes and his followers were periodically harassed for their radical beliefs.

Like the Fourierist and Owenite movements, the Oneida Community was populated by middle-class idealists. Many had been farmers; some had been professional people. Most of them were well educated. At least half the members were over forty-five. Noyes, like many of the others who took leading roles in the dissemination of communitarian ideas, was fairly young when the community started. But there was no point in the history of the community at which it consisted mainly of young people, like the communes of the counter culture a century later. One of the important reasons for the success of the Oneida colony was the care that it took in selecting new members. Compared with New Harmony, which began and apparently ended as a heterogeneous group of strangers, at Oneida many of the members had been acquainted before they formed together as a community. Even when the membership grew to more than two hundred, the Perfectionists maintained a sense of community that New Harmony never achieved.

One of the ways in which this sense of community was sustained was through the practice of mutual criticism. Oneida shared with most of the other communities a concern for self-improvement. For some groups, this became a highly ritualized concern. The Ephrata colony required each member to prepare a weekly statement of his spiritual condition. At Oneida, mutual criticism was used to encourage spiritual growth, but it was also a disciplinary technique as well as a primitive form of psychoanalysis. In some respects, it anticipated the use of encounter groups a century later.

#### Few Economic Successes

Very few of the nineteenth-century communes joined idealism with economic success as the Perfectionists did. Like most of the other groups, they first attempted to earn a living through farming. But farming is a notoriously difficult way to support a self-sufficient community, and Noyes later explained that the reason for the failure of so many of them was their "land mania," the unwillingness to turn to any other sort of industry. The Perfectionists came well endowed with the funds to experiment with a number of different enterprises. They started with a saw mill and a flour mill, turned to the manufacture of silk thread and traveling bags, and finally turned a profit with the manufacture of the Newhouse animal trap, a crude product for a spiritual community. Years later, the most visible remnant of this community which started in determined idealism was a highly solvent corporation, Oneida Ltd. Similarly, the name of the Amana community in Iowa is kept alive by a line of refrigerators. And the Shakers are best remembered for their practical innovations, the flathead broom which we still use and the split wooden clothespin.

Along with almost every other community of this period, New Harmony ended in discord. By the end of the century only a few anarchist and religious colonies remained. Judging from their longevity, most of them had been conspicuous failures. The average life-span of the Fourierist communes was one to two years. Of the nonreligious communities, the North American Phalanx lasted longest, for almost thirteen years. The religious communities fared better, proving the truth of Nordhoff's assertion that "a commune to exist harmoniously, must be composed of persons who are of one mind upon some question, which to them shall appear so important as to take the place of religion, if it is not essentially religious; though it need not be fanatically held." The Oneida, Aurora, Bethel, and Zoarite communities - all religious groups - lasted more than twenty-five years. The Rappites, the Shakers, and the Ephrata colony lasted more than a hundred years.

Why did a movement that caused so much excitement and attracted so many followers end in such a dreary catalog of failures? Noyes concluded his history of the movement with the testimony of dozens of disillusioned leaders remembering petty quarrels over land titles, mismanagement, and economic failures. One of them gave up his communal experiment with "a conviction that the theory of Communism could not be carried out in practice; that the attempt was premature, the time had not yet arrived, and the necessary conditions did not yet exist." The Sylvania Association ended with the complaint that "idle and greedy people find their way into such attempts and soon show forth their character by burdening others with too much labor, and in time of scarcity supplying themselves with more than their allowance of various necessities, instead of taking less."

After three years, Robert Owen pronounced his verdict on New Harmony: "The attempt to unite a number of strangers not previously educated for the purpose, who should live together as a common family, was premature." He concluded that "the habits of the individual system die hard."

The conditions that had been favorable to the formation of small communities had changed by the end of the nineteenth century. The frontier was settled, and land was no longer as readily available. The scale of things had changed, too. In the 1820's America was a nation of small towns and small-scale industry, and the notion of forming a self-sufficient community of several hundred people was no anachronism. By the end of the century the assumption of plasticity, that institutions and habits were still being formed, was outmoded. The task for social idealists was to deal with existing institutions rather than to form new ones. But the most substantial change during this period had little to do with specific social or economic developments. During the 1800's, rightly called the Century of Great Hope, Owen's belief in individual improvement through the formation of ideal communities was the indispensable cornerstone of the communitarian movement. By the end of the century there were still utopian novelists, but very few people who believed that utopia was achievable.

Writing in 1965 about the communal experiments of the nineteenth century, Maren Lockwood concluded that "today, the utopian community is an anomaly, a curious revival of a dead tradition." In 1965, it made very good sense to relegate communitarian experiments to the status of a curious historical footnote. After all, how could communitarianism be modulated into the key of the twentieth century? And why should an idea which had languished for more than half a century be revived? Yet by 1968 there were more communal experiments in this country than had existed at any point in the nineteenth century. Where those communes were large groups cemented by strong leadership, today's communes are small and anarchistic. Where many of them were highly structured communities in which individual behavior was strictly regimented, the communities of today are consciously unstructured, the lives of their members purposefully unregulated. Where those groups consisted of men, women, and children of all ages, the communes of today consist mainly of young people in their late teens and early twenties. Yet, in a curiously unutopian sense, the communes of the counter culture are a revival of the nineteenth-century theme, attempts to effect radical change through small communitarian experiments.

## MODERN DAY COMMUNES

*There are differing opinions on the value and seriousness of the American communes. Printed below you will find a couple of different views and examples of these communes. The first, Retreat From Utopia, takes a negative view of the modern day communities. This article is excerpted from the previously mentioned Commitment and Community, by Rosabeth Moss Kanter. The second section is a more positive view of the communes' "anarchist" approach, excerpted from Communes in the Counter Culture, by Keith Melville. The third piece is a description of a community which is neither anarchist, kibbutz, but rather a combination of several different approaches. The book A Walden Two Experiment, by Kathleen Kinkade, describes in detail the development of this community.*

### RETREAT FROM UTOPIA

Today there is a renewed search for utopia and community in America - for alternative, group-oriented ways of life. But overwhelmingly, the grand utopian visions of the past have been replaced by a concern with relations in a small group. Instead of conceptions of alternative societies, what is emerging are conceptions of alternative families. Whereas communes of the past were described in books about socialism, communism, and cooperation, commune today are increasingly discussed in books about the family. Communes of the past called themselves "societies" (the Society of Believers, the Harmony Society), indicating their interest in comprehensiveness; today's groups are more frequently called "families" (the Family of Mystic Arts, the Lyman Family).

Some grand visions remain, but they are the exception rather than the rule. Even the grand visions do not breed grand communities. B. F. Skinner's Walden Two, a fictional description of a flourishing, comprehensive, industrialized utopian community on its own land with one thousand people, has inspired the formation of several communes, but one of these, Twin Oaks, in Virginia, as yet consists of less than fifty people living at a subsistence level; another, the Association for Social Design in Boston, folded after several attempts to enlarge beyond a half-dozen residents; and still another, Walden Three, began in Providence with six residents; all working at outside jobs. Of the vast numbers of communes emerging today (one New York Times estimate in 1970 was over two thousand; in 1971 a National Institute of Health spokesman estimated three thousand), only a few are larger than thirty people.

The contemporary commune movement is characterized by a diminishing scope. By and large, contemporary communes encompass fewer visions of social reconstruction, fewer hopes for permanence, fewer people, fewer demands on those people, and fewer institutions, than did the utopian communities of the nineteenth century. Much of this change is a function of differences between American society at the height of the commune movement of 1840-1860 and American society of 1960-1970. In some respects the two periods are remarkably similar. Social movements surfaced around the same kinds of issues: women, blacks, and even temperance (alcohol then, drugs today). Religious revivalism was at its height in the 1840s and 1850s, serving many of the same expressive, emotive and interpersonal contact functions as the encounter group movement today. Similar dissatisfactions with capitalism were expressed. For every type of commune then, a similar instance can be found today. In both periods there have been anarchists resisting any kind of structure as well as spiritualists totally obedient to their messiah. Concern with life styles and nutrition as integral parts of spiritual growth were found among the Shakers of the past as well as the macrobiotic communes today. Large numbers

of people wandered from commune to commune then, just as others are doing today. A concern with individual fulfillment can often be found beneath reformist impulses in both periods. In the nineteenth century this concern was expressed in religious rhetoric as "salvation"; in the twentieth, in psychological language as "personal growth". But the dominance of psychological over religious or political rhetoric among communes today is itself indicative of their diminishing scope. "Doing your own thing" is a pervasive ethic in many contemporary communes, which places the person's own growth above concern for social reform, political and economic change, or the welfare of the community. The person is free to leave when no longer satisfied; his involvement with the group is limited.

Related to the pervasiveness of the personal fulfillment ethic is the rise of nonutopian communes. An outgrowth of the hippie movement, these groups share property, close relations, and a livelihood, but they lack ideology or programs for social reform. They resemble an extended family more than a utopian community - a family of brothers and sisters without parents. They develop from friendships rather than groups welded together by shared ideology; their basis is solidarity. Composed primarily of seventeen to thirty year olds, these communes may be temporary ways of "making do" for a particular phase in a person's life, rather than permanent settlements oriented toward the future. The language of the counterculture signals this impermanence; terms like "into", "trip", and "scene" convey an episodic quality, a temporary contact that one dips "into", then quickly and easily moves "out of". In these communes, lacking any highly developed utopian or transcendent vision, the personal and the intuitive define the quality of life; for example, how good are the "vibes", how many "uppers" can a person have. For this reason, personal fulfillment rather than strength or endurance of the group are measures of success for these communes, even though the first is not often possible without the latter.

In place of the weakened utopian faith of the twentieth century, a sense of nostalgia pervades the commune movement, from youth communes to Christian homesteads. The strong belief in progress held by nineteenth century groups is considerably diminished today. Communes of the past were often looking ahead, anticipating the future, and building on their concept of history. The Shakers, for example, conceived of themselves as anticipating the next stage of human evolution. More often today, however, communes are looking behind them, toward a romanticized past, turning their backs in horror on the movement of history. Throughout the commune movement is found nostalgia for the small town, for the farm, for crafts, and hand work, for natural foods, and for the dress styles, hair styles, toys, herbal medicines, and equipment of the nineteenth century. The folksy, down on the farm tone of The Mother Earth News, which publicizes communes and back-to-the-land technology, expresses this nostalgia. Also involved is a longing to return to the more recent past, a nostalgia for the simplicity, innocence, playfulness, and lack of obligation of childhood; the flower child image of the hippie movement symbolizes this tendency. Judson Jerome characterized these phenomena as part of a movement to create "Eden" rather than "utopia."

## COMMUNES IN THE COUNTER-CULTURE

Communes are attempts to create new models. They are different strategies toward the same goal, the creation of a community that serves basic human needs more efficiently than does the mainstream of society.

If the program of the communes is to create a new life style, a society of micro-cosm, this ethos is best expressed by the rural communes. There are many urban communes, and "Resistance" communes very much involved with the task of evolving a hybrid style, consistent with both the exigencies of urban life and radical politics on the one hand and the need to develop new social forms on the other. But much less concerned about doing something about this society than their urban counterparts, the rural communes are freer to create a new one. The embracing of the anarchist tradition a return to an intimate community, the rejection of technology and the materialist ethic, and the search for alternative nonrational realities are fundamental themes in understanding the counter culture in general. But, specifically, these are the themes of the embryonic new society being created in the rural communes of the counter culture.

If many of the utopias of the past were antidotes to disorder, the lesson of the anti-utopias and the last half-century is that it is not disorder but too much order which threatens our society. It is in this context that the attempt to revive the anarchist tradition makes sense. In a society that still justifies centralism in the name of efficiency and a profusion of regulatory details as necessary concessions to the complexity of modern life, the anarchist task is to dismantle as many forms of dysfunctional authority and oppression as possible. Unlike most of the utopians, the anarchist stress freedom rather than order: their consistent theme is an emphasis on the unhindered natural development of the individual. Man is essentially good, but he has been warped by political, religious, educational, and economic institutions. The anarchist assumption is that the only legitimate form of regulation is self-regulation. In Proudhon's words, "Whoever lays his hands on me to govern me is a usurper and a tyrant; I declare him to be my enemy." Or even more simply, in the words of the Australian anarchist Harry Hooten, "All handling of man is manhandling."

The liberal regards institutions as the safeguards of personal liberty; the anarchist regards them as a threat to freedom, as repressive authority. As opposed to the treacherous ideal of "law and order", the anarchist argues that the only viable order results from the spontaneous, voluntary cooperation of individuals within the social organism. Since law is an external constraint, it inhibits self-regulation and is therefore morally illegitimate. Anarchism means life without government. For all the differences among the anarchist writers, the common assumption is that men are naturally good, that if they are placed in an environment where they are not corrupted by institutions or meddling authority they can live together harmoniously and will work spontaneously for the good of the whole society.

Rural communes are scattered in clusters across the country in almost every region except the South and the Midwest. The first ones sprang up in California, north of San Francisco in Mendocino and Sonoma counties, and south off the coastal highway running down to Big Sur. Then a lot of the young people who were most serious about communal living left for northern New Mexico and southern Colorado to populate the area around Taos. By 1969, Vermont and the Hudson Valley near

Woodstock were communal centers on the East. And in the last few years, new clusters have grown up in the Mount Shasta area in northern California, in Oregon, and around Eugene and Grant's Pass, and on the northwest coast around Seattle and Vancouver, British Columbia.

Despite some minor regional differences, such as the fact that craft-oriented communities are more common in New England than they are in the West, groups in different parts of the country are remarkably similar. One reason for this is that there is a great deal of migration from one commune to the next all across the country, creating a very efficient communications network about survival techniques, new groups, and "bad vibes." Even among the more stable communes, and the older ones - that is to say, any group that stays in the same place for two or three years - very few of the current residents are the same people who were there at the beginning.

The most important statistic about an eminently unstatistical movement is that every year since 1967 has brought an increasing number of communes. For every group that has been chased away or simply dissolved, several others have started up.

In the smallest groups, which typically include eight to ten people, membership is closed, publicity and visitors are actively discouraged, and the members' ages range from the late teens through late twenties. The larger groups include from twenty to forty members, most of whom are in their late teens or early twenties, and have a faster rate of turnover in membership.

Land is obtained in a number of different ways. In some cases, such as Lou Gottlieb's Morningstar Ranch, the founder buys the property and invites others to share it. In the Taos area, several hippie benefactors have purchased land and donated it for communal use. In other cases, the original members used their savings to purchase land, or monthly payments for the land are scraped together. One other technique is to claim public land, some of which is still available through the government's Homestead Act.

But no matter how cheap the land, the limited income could not possibly sustain most of these groups for more than a few months if they didn't adopt a life style of voluntary primitivism. Needs are drastically reduced. The diet is fairly nutritious, although monotonous and low in protein. Clothing is secondhand or homemade. Whenever anything needs to be built or repaired, someone learns how to do it. And scavenging is raised to a high art. (If there were an award for resourcefulness in this category, the residents of Drop City, one of the first of the rural communes, would probably win it. They pioneered in making very respectable geodesic domes out of the tops of abandoned cars, and on one memorable night they dismantled an entire unused bridge.)

#### Grant's Pass, Oregon

As in most of the other rural hip settlements, the daily routine here is a simple one. In the morning, the big gong hanging from the tree by the lodge is rung, and members straggle in from all parts of the property for coffee and a simple breakfast. During the day there is work to be done: planting, weeding, harvesting in the garden, splitting logs, or fishing. Frequently a few members will go out to work at day labor such as crop picking. And there's a series of projects to

work on, such as the new septic tank which had to be installed. There is a lot of time, though, for sitting around, talking, and walking in the sun. In the evening, there's the meal together, then music on the platform back in the woods, and quiet hours after dark for talking or reading by the kerosene lamps. The diversions include trips into Grant's Pass to the laundromat, and maybe a stop on the way back for ice cream, candy bars, or pizza as a change from a fairly monotonous diet. But, in general, especially among the members who have been here longest, there's little interest in the outside world, including radical politics: "We have a pretty good idea what's going on out there," said Diane, "and we don't want any part of it."

The one newspaper that somehow found its way to the main table in the lodge during the week I was there was viewed as a curiosity rather than a necessary link with the world outside.

### TWIN OAKS

Twin Oaks, located near Louisa, Virginia, frankly admires the American utopias of the past. The commune workshop building is named Harmony, after the nineteenth century village in Indiana occupied first by the Rappites and then by Robert Owens' short-lived New Harmony. The old farmhouse containing the kitchen and eating space is called Llano, after an early twentieth century socialist group. A weekly class on utopias informs members of their communal heritage. The oldest member of Twin Oaks - and the nearest it has to a communal philosopher, although members are quick to deny her any special status - has studied histories of utopian communities and been impressed with the clever ways in which long-lived ventures of the past handled recurrent human problems.

Twin Oaks also has a peculiarly twentieth-century heritage, since it was inspired by B.F. Skinner's Walden Two, a novel published in 1948 about a utopian community based on the principles of behaviorist psychology. Twin Oaks was started by eight people who met at a Walden Two conference in Ann Arbor, Michigan in 1966. They talked together, discovered common goals, met again in Atlanta, and with money received from one member of the group, purchased a farm near Washington, D.C., from a retiring tobacco farmer. In June 1967 the first eight moved onto the land, comprising 123 acres with a river, creeks, woods, pastures, and fields. By March of 1969 the group had grown to fifteen, despite the loss of some original members. By the end of 1971, Twin Oaks was a community routinely feeding and housing about forty-five people - thirty six members (including only two of the original eight) and about ten visitors at any one time.

The commune has supported itself in a variety of ways. After discovering that farming could supply food for the table but no additional profit, the group began hand-weave hammocks to sell them by mail. After four years, however, Twin Oaks was still not self-supporting. About half of the commune's income in 1971 came from outside jobs; at any one time, eight members held outside employment on two-month rotating shifts, with each worker bringing in at least \$50 a week. Another quarter of the income came from hammock sales. The remainder came from visitors (who pay up to \$3.00 a day, depending on length of stay), crafts, and a contract to type addresses and stuff envelopes for a nearby corporation. A brief attempt to operate a country store near the commune proved unfeasible.



Twin Oaks combines many elements of the contemporary communal counterculture with its own distinctive values of order and organization, equality and social justice. These values can be seen in the nuances of Twin Oaks culture as well as in its work and government. Though sights and sounds of Twin Oaks life often resemble those of other contemporary communes, there are important differences. It is organized and growing; it has rules; and it does not turn its back on technology or commercial activities. Twin Oaks, like many communes possesses wide fields, woods, a river, an old farmhouse, muddy roads, and the ubiquitous dome, constructed to house a conference. Yet there are signs of exceptional activity here, for two new long buildings have been built by the group, and ground is broken for a third. Cows and pigs are in the barn, pets underfoot, peanuts drying in a shed, large window boxes filled with thyme and sage, and organic gardening magazines around the dining room. But unlike many other communes, Twin Oaks farms only casually, relying instead on development of commune industries. The people look like those on any youth commune, being predominantly white, middle-class, and in their twenties, with long curly hair. Some bearded, wearing tattered blue jeans, a few in long, flowing print dresses an occasional woman in a nightgown or a man fresh from a bath wrapped in a towel. But Twin Oaks also has a few members over forty, including a former computer scientist from a major corporation.

## THE JEWISH COMMUNAL FARM IN AMERICA

by Kenneth Bob

During the last two decades of the nineteenth century, approximately twenty-five Jewish colonies were formed in the United States. The uncertainty about the exact number of colonies is due to the fact that most collapsed within a few years of their inception.

The settlers began their projects with fresh idealism, believing with Tolstoy that "all the world honors and protects the bread producer." Most received initial aid from one of the several backers that showed interest in the colonies, such as the Alliance Israelite Universelle in Paris, the Baron de Hirsch Fund, the Jewish Colonization Society, the Montefiore Agricultural Aid Society, the Jewish Alliance of America, and members of local Jewish communities.

Before the great influx of immigrants in the 1880's, two experiments in Jewish farming had already been undertaken. Both failed. In 1820, Major Mordechai Manuel Noah bought a tract of land on Grand Island, located on the Niagara River, with intention of starting a colony, Ararat, on the land. Despite much publicity and talk about the idea, the colony never materialized. Later, in 1837, a group of eleven Jewish families from New York City purchased land in upstate New York near the village of Wawarsing and founded Sholem. Because the soil was rocky, they manufactured goose quill pens and fur caps, while continuing to farm. Despite economic problems, the group maintained good spirits, and even built a small synagogue for worship. As they slipped slowly into debt, they took to working in a tannery to support themselves. But the tannery went out of business, the foundation of the community collapsed and in 1842 nine families left. The last settlers left in 1846.

The first colony of the Am Olam movement began in Sicily Island, Louisiana in 1881, and was led by a wealthy, early immigrant named Herman Rosenthal. The New Orleans Jewish community greeted them warmly, and helped them find land, which the 140 settlers began to clear. The settlers had an excellent social life, including debates, discussions, group singing, and even two weddings. However, their physical existence was less successful. They were confronted by the "typical disasters of the area; torrential rainstorms, malaria, yellow fever, floods, heat, and isolation." In 1882, an overflow of the Mississippi River washed away houses, cattle, implements, and the colony's crops. The colonists gave up, but many appeared later in other colonies.

The "most tragic of all projects" was founded in Arkansas, where, in the spring of 1883, 150 new immigrants came from New York to build a colony. With the understanding that a lumber company would purchase wooden staves at twenty dollars per thousand, to support them, they bought land that was totally forested. While they began to work, the climate alternated between extreme heat and tremendous rain

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storms, and most of the settlers contracted malaria. Although money was sent from New York, they gave up only a few months later, at the end of 1883.

One Am Olam group formed in Odessa, Russia formed a colony 250 miles south of Portland, Oregon, named New Odessa. This group differed from others because its community, comprised of Jewish students from the Gymnasium and University, was formed along strict collectivistic lines. Thus it was frowned upon by the rest of the Jewish community. In 1881, warning was sent from Germany to America about the group's radicalism and its liberal ideas about religion. When members finally reached the United States they were forced to raise their own money, since their ideas "left Jewish leaders cold." Some went to training farms while others formed "The Commune" in New York. Finally, they received some financial assistance from Michael Helprin, an intellectual liberal from Russia, to send out a scouting party, first unsuccessfully to Texas and the Midwest, and finally to the Northwest. In July of 1882, twenty-five initial colonists built a two story house, planted vegetables for home use, and made arrangements with the railroad to cut wood for railroad ties. They were joined by a number of others, and became financially solvent with virtually no assistance. The creeks and river were full of fish, and occasionally, a tradesman of the group would earn additional money for the common fund by working in town. The group operated on a very strict schedule and lived more frugally than necessary. Furthermore, they lived a full cultural life of music, reading, debates, and weekly self-criticism. They lived a "Religion of Harmony" which meant being "good people and no more." Ultimately, however, they were divided by philosophical differences, with one group following William Frey, the strict ideologist, and others adopting a more practical line. Feeling that their differences were insoluble, Frey and fifteen others left on good terms. Almost immediately, disaster struck. First, fire destroyed the house, then the railroad contract was lost. After three and one half years, New Odessa fell apart.

Between 1884 and 1886 seven colonies began in Kansas, none of them succeeding for any length of time. North Dakota was the site of another failure, from 1882 to 1885.

Opinions among the "experts" in New York blamed the choice of territory for the failure of the settlements. Thus, one questions the choice of Cotapaxi, in Fremont County, Colorado as the site for an agricultural colony. In 1882 the Hebrew Emigrant Aid Society sent thirteen families to set up camp there. They could hardly begin due to the arid climate and the quality of the soil. There was no allowance for irrigation, and during the spring it was not necessary since "mountain torrents became a menace to life and property." Needless to say, Cotapaxi did not last long, and many of the original settlers went on to farm in California.

From 1882 to the end of the nineteenth century colonies began and ended up and down the East Coast - in Washington, D.C., Virginia, Connecticut, and other places for reasons similar to these recounted above. In 1892 twelve families from Bay City, Michigan, founded Palestine near Bad Axe, Michigan. They were supported from the beginning by the "Beth El Relief Fund" of Detroit. A local Jewish farmer who had lived in the area for twenty-five years came in to help, but to no avail. The colony was struck by no major disasters; it simply couldn't produce enough to live on. The settlers were given a grant by the Baron de Hirsch Fund, which held off the mortgage company for several years. They managed to build a school, bring a teacher, who also acted as spiritual leader, for the children and build a fine community. Finally, in 1889 they ran out of support and excuses and were forced to leave. They just couldn't make enough from the land to survive without outside support.

By now it is understandable why Jewish communal farming in America is not a frequently discussed topic. The exception was the south New Jersey colonies of Alliance, Woodbine, Carmel, and Rosehayn, which survived not only the difficult initial years, but also economic depressions in the 1890's and 1930's. Several reasons have been advanced as to why these colonies succeeded while others failed. Their location was good both agriculturally and for business. The soil was good; the climate was fair. They were located thirty to forty miles from New York, so that they had ample markets nearby. In addition, being in such a location made the colonies quite accessible to wealthy philanthropists who wished to see their money put to good use. This, in turn, led to greater donations, making the south Jersey colonies the best supported "experiment" in the United States. In addition, the colony remained free from natural disasters in its early years.

Perhaps the major reason for the success of the colonies, however, was their combination of farming with some sort of local industry. They continued with commercial agriculture and considered themselves a farming community, but in times of hardship they always had steady income from their manufactured product. Especially during the early winter months, the added income helped them survive.

Compared to the other Jersey colonies, Carmel was the most radical community, interested in experimenting with different modes of living. In "Immigrants to Freedom," by Joseph Brandes, the author attributes this to its being comprised of many tailors, as opposed to farmers. At the beginning of its existence, they experimented in communal living, and as a result of this, continued to be very community-conscious. They enjoyed discussion groups, Yiddish operettas, hikes, and torchlight parades for Jewish holidays, while participating in token celebration of American holidays.

The largest of the colonies was Woodbine, also founded late in 1891. Three hundred settlers built their own houses, encouraged by the words of Baron de Hirsch that "only property owners have a real stake in society." In addition to being involved in agriculture they also manufactured clothing, pocketbooks, hats, and paper boxes. With the success of these colonies comfortably assured, the Jewish leaders looked to the future for ways to increase Jewish farming. They hoped to add to the knowledge of prospective farmers, and established the Baron de Hirsch Agricultural school at Woodbine in 1894. The school accommodated up to 250 students, and included Jewish education as well as necessary subject for a complete agricultural education. Woodbine also prided itself as the "first self-governed Jewish community since the fall of Jerusalem" since it was the first colony to break ties with neighboring towns and incorporate itself.

The first New Jersey colony, Alliance, was a joint project of the Hebrew Emigrant Aid Society of New York and the Paris-based Alliance Israelite Universelle. Before the 400 immigrants arrived on May 10, 1882, the HEAS had already contracted Leach Brothers to build three large houses for temporary living quarters. Before their individual houses were completed, the colonists lived communally in these houses. Supplies were taken care of by the HEAS which ran up a bill of \$41,000.00 the first three months. A Philadelphia rabbi, Sabato Morais, came to perform a funeral service that July, and proceeded to return to Philadelphia to raise money for the settlers. Since there was no crop that first year, they hired themselves out as fruit pickers, working in cranberry patches for extra money. During the first winter, the HEAS converted one house into a cigar factory and another into a sewing factory. Wages in the cigar factory were \$1.75 per week, bringing charges of exploitation from Jewish newspapers. The factory was mysteriously burned to the ground later that year.

Arson was suspected. After the first crop, colony life normalized and the residents settled down to build a community. Visitors called it New Jerusalem, due mainly to the strict observance of the Sabbath, and the kosher meat delivered from Philadelphia. The settlers established Hebrew schools for their children, as well as night schools for the adults to learn both English and Jewish studies.

They were not radicals. They voted two to one in favor of women's suffrage. They heard Eugene Debs and Emma Goldman, and they gave to Zionist causes. They formed Orthodox congregations, and Reform congregations. They were Jewish members of a pluralistic American society. They followed the progressive philosophy of the middle class, nothing more, nothing less, and they attempted to start farms in America. The movement left a few communities in South Jersey, and individual Jewish farmers in unlikely places across the country. Jews did prove that they could farm, and they proved that they were human in their reactions.

NEW JEWISH CONSCIOUSNESS ON CAMPUS  
by George E. Johnson

If we look closely at what young Jewish college students are doing, we can see its long range implications. What they are about is not some sort of cop-out-such as drugs or a meditation journey to nirvana (although admittedly some are taking this route)-but a self-conscious attempt to define who they are in terms of the history of Jews and the Jewish tradition in order to create a way of living in the modern world, not just at college. In this regard, these young people are going beyond a search for transcendental reality which leads some Jews to Hare Krishna, Yoga, and the Jesus Movement, combining their search for an understanding of mysteries of life and their ethnic consciousness by adapting traditional religious forms - yielding communities which not only engage collectively in fervent davening, but in the mundane tasks of living. In certain respects, for example, communal living arrangements - the Bayit and the Kibbutz - may not survive exactly as they exist on campuses today - but the basic thrust of such arrangements will remain. In an article published recently in Network, a member of the University of North Carolina Bayit illustrates - rather inadvertently - how much this movement is an outgrowth of the individualism and alienation of American life and the need to bring order onto one's existence out of the chaotic world all around, as well as the need to assert one's distinctive Jewishness: "Our home is Kosher. The responsibility of keeping the house in order is divided evenly among us, each member responsible for a different task each week. The importance of our working together in a communal spirit on even the most mundane of jobs has been immeasurable in the Bayit's development. We view the personal interaction as a significant element in the growth of the community." The ideology of these young men and women is as much a life-style of cooperation and mutual interdependence, as it is what the writer says explicitly: "We unify around this single theme: our belief that Jews are a people and that Judaism is a life-style; encompassing religious, cultural and humanistic values."

Nor are these efforts self-consciously directed only toward the college campus. A published letter from the UCLA-based Westwood Free Minyan suggests, rather, that these young Jews are, like their elders, interested in Jewish survival - and not merely in subverting extensions of the "counter-culture." The letter states: "In order to avert the untimely death of Judaism in this country, alternatives have taken the form of the "chavurah," a group of friends who gather for study and prayer within a Jewish framework."

Some of these group activities include Shabbat morning services at members' homes, with simultaneous davening in Hebrew and English, open discussion of prayers and the Torah portion, "being able to keep Shabbat and wanting to..." coming together for Havdalah, breaking Yom Kippur fast together as a community, building a Sukkah as a "community." "The key work," the writer emphasized, "is definitely community."

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*This piece is excerpted from a longer article which first appeared in Analysis, published by the Synagogue Council of America.*

Only someone unfamiliar with Jewish history and religious culture could view the values of mutual interdependence, the centrality of the Jewish community and the importance of practical living patterns as products of "counter-culture." It is, however, perfectly understandable that these values and expressions of them seem "foreign" to a brand of Judaism to which traditional observance is thought of as arcane.

But to these small clusters of young Jews springing up nearly everywhere that significant numbers of Jewish college students can be found, the model of the integrated Jewish life-style answers a deeply felt need to understand themselves and each other, and to chart a way of life. And it is in this last regard that we find its long-range significance. These young Jews are consciously looking for a life-style that will take them through life - not just through college. As this self-consciousness of young Jews builds, they will want to continue to express it wherever they live. They will want close, tightly knit communities, rather than huge synagogues. They will want to study in small groups - and will prefer to pay for three teaching rabbis, rather than for one administratively overburdened rabbi and a huge, highly mortgaged building. They will weave their Jewishness into the fabric of their lives, rather than saving it for a few days a year, and will define it in terms of knowledge and behavior, rather than through organizational programs, lox and bagels, and fund raising-drives.

The example of the chavurah and its spirit are already of interest to many older, "affiliated Jews." During the fifties, in fact, new Orthodox communities in such places as Brookline, Philadelphia, Washington, St. Louis, and Berkeley, were created around a concept not dissimilar to the chavurah. These are small synagogue communities with significant numbers of members with ordination, who earn their livelihood in non-Jewish professions, who may not have a "professional" rabbi at all, and who pursue regular and advanced classical textual studies. More recently, and largely under the impact of such communities as Chavurat-Shalom in Somerville, Mass., and Fabrangen, in Washington, D.C. congregational chavurot have been started by suburban synagogues in Chicago, Philadelphia, Boston, and Washington. Several Conservative Washington, D.C. congregations have new chavurot which get together for a small group service and Torah study Shabbat mornings in an informal setting. Jacob Neusner, in a recent United Synagogue Review article noted the existence of "less intensive" experimental small groups of adults - Reconstructionist Foundation groups in a dozen cities, and four chavurot in Denver, Colorado. Neusner, who has studied the chavurah movement for some time, is equivocal about the long range impact of chavurot: it "may end up merely a fad or it may serve as a regenerative force in Judaism."

There are few signs of the disappearance of chavurot, however, even as "youth-culture" rapidly disappears as a major factor in the life of college students. The opposite is in fact the case. Such groups as Chavurat-Shalom and Fabrangen, two of the most important of the early "chavurot" are alive and healthy. Chavurot-Shalom, most of whose members are graduate students pursuing careers as Jewish teachers or Jewish professionals, while not a counter-seminary, has nevertheless become a magnet attracting both Jewish high-school students and college drop-outs. Fabrangen has been invited to hold services at a number of local synagogues.

The strength and the future of the chavurah movement and the related phenomena sprouting both on and off campus can be found in the currents of history.

America has played a peculiar trick on the last few generations of American Jews. After permitting, encouraging and accelerating the assimilation of each succeeding generation of Jews - bringing Jews fully into the mainstream of American life, the American Dream for many, especially the young, has largely spent itself.

Young American Jews, secure in their Americanism, are neither defensive about being American nor about being Jewish. They see not only the contradiction between American political rhetoric and the behavior of Americans toward each other and in the world, but between Jewish religious rhetoric and the quality of Jewish life. The distance between talk and action, within American political life, and within the religious community, has set young people on a search for examples of life that have coherence and meaning. The impact of the Six-Day War and the Soviet Jews's Zionist resurgence has, along with increased domestic ethnic consciousness, challenged young Jews to find direction from the very Jewish tradition their parents and grandparents elected to relegate to second place as the price of acceptance in America. Thus we find new, more personal, and more practical life-related groups in Chicago, Chapel Hill, Washington, and elsewhere - writing new prayers and new services to satisfy their need for a personal relation to HaShem, and forming new communities to satisfy their need for a personal relationship with Am Yisrael.

For their parents' generation, congregational affiliation was the "American" thing to do; in this new ethnically, spiritually, and relation conscious generation the "American" thing to do just may be the chavurah. For the first time since the mass-emigration from the Pale, the "Americanized" Jew can - without being defensive - deal with form and content of authentic religious tradition. Partly, it is because other ethnic and religious groups are also doing it; and partly because the form and content of the classical Jewish tradition is relevant to our times.



THE 1973 PHENOMENON--JEWISH RESIDENCES  
by Jon Groner

A new phenomenon has appeared on the Jewish campus scene in recent years: the Jewish communal residence. Typically located near or on a large university campus, and typically drawing their residents mostly from the university setting, nearly twenty of these communities have sprung up - particularly in the past two years. The communities are usually called chavurot (fellowships) or batim (houses), and they now flourish not only in New York and Boston but also in such places as North Carolina, Minneapolis, and Austin, Texas. The typical chavurah has between ten and thirty members, has communal cooking and cleaning assignments, and has as its goal "being Jewish" or "living a Jewish life," whatever that means to that particular group - or to each individual resident.

The chavurot show great diversity. Some are explicitly Zionist and aliya-oriented; others are actively committed to living Jewishly in galut (exile). Some are composed largely of observant students, while others run the gamut from atheist to Chasidic members. Some have extensive programs for the campus Jewish community, while some are devoted only to their own Jewish development. But the similarities sufficiently outweigh the diversities so that this can be called a Jewish communitarian movement.

#### Creating a home for Judaism

Why community? This question used to be easier to answer. When the New York and Boston chavurot were founded in the late sixties, the pat answer of that period was largely correct: activist Jews, veterans of the anti-war movement and the counterculture, were discovering their Jewish roots. They were adapting familiar forms - participatory democracy, the commune, the search for authenticity and wholeness - to a Jewish context.

But we are now in a second stage. I live in a chavurah - Beit Ephraim at Columbia University - which has only a few members who come from a heavily countercultural background. It is impossible to generalize about our motivations for forming a chavurah. Some came primarily to feel comfortable observing mitzvot, others primarily to learn, others to improve Jewish life on campus. Beyond all this, however, is an unspoken root feeling which none of us can express or needs to express. We are longing for a home. We feel instinctively that being Jewish is not something you do in a synagogue or a Jewish organization or even a classroom. We want to be hal mish, not out of a vaguely counter-cultural striving for authenticity but out of a desire to experience Judaism as it was meant to be experienced. We are no longer adapting the form of another culture, but returning to one of our own. It's hard to light Shabbat candles or compose a creative service or have a Talmud shi'ur (lesson) in a dormitory room; some of us have tried. Our bayit is a place where nothing Jewish is alien.

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*Jon Groner wrote this article for the May 11, 1973 issue of Sh'ma magazine.*

The chavurot have common problems, most of which are dealt with at length in the succeeding articles. To whom is a chavurah responsible? What is its obligation to the demands of Tradition, as opposed to the demands of its members? How can a sense of community be instilled while avoiding unhealthy cliquishness? What makes it better than a Jewish fraternity? How can personality problems be resolved?

#### Molding Jewish souls, not communities

These specific problems are being solved, or are proving insoluble, in the various chavurot. But another long-range question has not been considered yet in any depth. What will happen to the residents when they are no longer on the university scene? What will the chavurah experience mean to us in "real," non-student life? Will the community be affected by an influx of chavurah veterans? How much will survive the transition from the campus to the suburb?

Despite their proliferation and apparent success, I still see the chavurah as basically a campus phenomenon. Most members implicitly see their mode of existence as a means and not an end. They are searching for a sense of "home," with all that implies, for their Jewish identities and for the chance to learn about their tradition. The chavurah, in the campus context, is an ideal way to do these things. With notable exceptions, the chavurot are not primarily dedicated to the values of a commune (i.e. the importance of physical labor, the need to share material possessions, the equal division of tasks without regard for natural ability). They are dedicated to creating a Jewish environment in the broadest sense, and the chavurah is the way students want to do this. We in Beit Ephraim feel we have more in common with the New York Chavurah, a non-residential group of committed Jews, than with non-Jewish communes in the Columbia area. What we, and many other chavurah members, will take with us will be the spirit and the feeling of the community rather than its day-to-day details. A moving Shabbat service, an exciting late-night rap session, a solid study group, a house-cleaning for Pesach - these will serve as guideposts for our future Jewish existence. On this level - by influencing and inspiring individuals, not by remaking our communal structures - the chavurah movement will have its effect on American Jewry.

## HAVURAT SHALOM

Founded in 1968 and begun as a serious attempt to provide an alternative to the traditional modes of Jewish study carried out in American seminaries, Hebrew colleges and universities, Havurat Shalom in Somerville, MA, is the oldest of the contemporary Jewish fellowship groups. Numbering around twenty members (mostly graduate students and young professionals in the Boston area), increased emphasis in the Havurah has gradually been placed upon the "religious" and "communal" aspects of the group. Members live in the immediate neighborhood of the Havurah building and gather together for classes, projects (i.e. crafts, writing a new Haggadah), weekly communal meals, business meetings, lectures (guest speakers), "in-house" entertainment (by members), major clean-ups, and an intensive Shabbat experience. Saturday morning davening is open to the public, and with advance notice we welcome guests to share Shabbat with us.

## THE KIBBUTZ OF MADISON

Kibbutz Langdon is somewhere between a bayit and a chavurah. Its members come from a very wide range. Twenty-four members have observant, Zionist, radical, straight ideas and lifestyles. During the week we pursue our Jewish and other interests. In that sense we are a bayit - we all live together. On Shabbat we become a chavurah of sorts. Different people are responsible for tefilot each week and that way we learn from each other. Over the year minhagim are developed and incorporated into the service. The basic premises are respect to everyone's interpretation of "Jewish identity" and the desire to learn.

## CHAVURAT HAMIDBAR

Not yet a year old, Chavurat Hamidbar plays an increasingly vital role in the lives of its members, some twenty-five Albuquerque families with diverse religious background and aspirations but with a common desire and commitment to live a more intense and meaningful Jewish life. With our forty-two children we're a lively, non-hierarchical, experimental group, about half of us associated with the University of New Mexico, mostly faculty - ten professors representing the Medical School, English, History, Secondary Education, Linguistics, Physics & Astronomy, Biology and Engineering. Several families have spent or plan to spend some time, for example a sabbatical year, in Israel, and some have close relatives living there. We run a seven-hours-a-week, nongraded (multi-age and level) Hebrew school, tailored to the individual child, = seventeen children. Their excellent teachers are two UNM students. The chavurah is open to new members but does no active recruiting. Meetings, celebrations, etc. are held in people's homes and public parks; for major holidays we use the UNM chapel. Most recent and monumental achievement: the acquisition of a Torah.

## CHAVURAT AVIV, CLEVELAND

When Chavurat Aviv was founded three years ago, it began with one house and twelve people. During the past year it has grown to nineteen people living in four houses. Two of the houses are large communal houses with six people living in one and nine in the other, while the other two are apartments where two married couples live.

In terms of religion and politics, we have a blend of people and beliefs, ranging from very observant to nonobservant, from Zionists to people not concerned with Israel. Nevertheless, getting together for communal Shabbat and holiday experiences is a central part of our chavurah. We also have a Jewish Study program in which we recently held a very successful seminar on Jewish Medical Ethics. Some of our chevra have been involved in a Hebrew Sunday School. All of our decisions are made by consensus for we believe in the politics of compromise.

## BEIT EPHRAIM

Beit Ephraim is a residential Jewish community for twenty-eight Columbia students at 535 W. 112th St., two blocks from the Columbia campus. We occupy a six-story brownstone building which we lease from the university. We are extremely diverse in make-up, including religious, non-religious, anti-religious, Zionist, non-Zionist ethnic, and other kinds of Jews, including at least eleven varieties of b'nei teshuvah. We sponsor Shabbat meals, lectures, Rosh Hodesh meals, holiday programs and other activities open to all.

## BAYIT IN CHAPEL HILL, NORTH CAROLINA

In October 1971, a small group of five students got together to express a personal need - that of expressing a Jewishness that has been profoundly instilled within us since childhood. Our backgrounds are by no means homogeneous. We unify around a single theme: Jews are a people and Judaism is a civilization, encompassing religious, social, political, and humanitarian concerns. (We guess we're probably all Reconstructionist at heart.) Because our needs were, and are, so personally based, the community we have sought to create has been concentrated around close personal interrelationships. We began, therefore, in the fall of '71 aiming to form a chevrah. We thought that if that first goal could be achieved, we would then decide whether the commitment was there to live together. From the beginning, we called ourselves "The Bayit." In September, 1972, seven students, four men and three women, began to live in The Bayit.

We have always recognized that The Bayit has a special role to play on the Carolina campus, that of raising the consciousness and helping to serve the Jewish needs of students. The temptation to become complacent in our comfortable surroundings is great and sometimes one must give oneself a little extra push to get out and involve the community. The Bayit works as programming assistant at Hillel and cooperates closely with Rabbi Siegal on religious, social, cultural, educational, and political activities. One tradition in Chapel Hill that has evolved is Shabbat - communal dinners and services held at Hillel, usually attended by 25 students or more. In our attempt to bring issues of Jewish concern to the general public, we write a weekly column in the campus paper, each week focusing upon a different topic.

Living in a small Southern town presents special problems. One of those is Kashrut. The Bayit keeps Kosher, and with little effort we found that a number of other Chapel Hill families do also. Therefore, along with Hillel, we have provided the initiative towards forming a Kosher meat co-op. The co-op sent in its first order this past December.

An academic element we have found missing on the U.N.C. campus is that of Judaic studies. Last year, The Bayit and other interested students made a concentrated appeal to the administration and succeeded in getting a modern Hebrew course established. This year, largely through the efforts of Dr. Eric Meyers at Duke University, a new privately-endowed joint U.N.C.-Duke Judaic studies program has been announced for the fall of 1973.

It is our commitment to Judaism that brings us together. But the success of The Bayit rests on the family feeling that has evolved. Although not complying with the economic definition of the term, we believe we can best be defined as a "Jewish commune." We do not share personal belongings, but all work is shared equally (insured by a dazzling array of schedules) without regard to sex. Perhaps it is our size that distinguishes us from other Jewish student residences, the latter being best defined as Hebrew Houses.

IMPRESSIONS OF THE NACHAS CONFERENCE:  
THE CHAVUROT AND OUR MOVEMENT  
by Richard Friedman

Members of various chavurot (fellowships) and batim (cooperative residential houses) from around the country gathered at Madison, Wisconsin, for the second conference of the North American Chavurot and Assorted Simchas (NACHAS) March 22-24 this year. They made a Shabbat whose mood ranged from the high ruach (spirit) of ma'ariv and zmirot to a pensive minchah and seudah shlishit. The discussion Friday night centered on sex roles in the chavurot. Many members of batim were concerned by the typing of certain house jobs by sex. A few groups accepted to some degree the traditional halachic minimization of the role of women in religious services, but even in professedly egalitarian groups women complained that the superior formal religious background of the men led them to dominate services and led the women to defer to them. Also, some of the women felt a lack of knowledgeable female teachers and felt uncomfortable learning from the men in their groups.

Shabbat afternoon there was a discussion of post-college alternatives, and differences between the primarily residential campus batim and the primarily non-residential and typically older chavurot. After watching a dance interpretation of a YL Peretz story, making havdalah, and previewing the ABC TV "Directions" show on Kibbutz Langdon, we discussed NACHAS's future.

At the conference I was struck by the differences in perspective between the campus-centered residential batim on the one hand and the chavurot I knew from the East Coast Weiss's Farm gatherings on the other. The attitude of most bayit members seemed to be that the bayit is a great place to be for the time being, or at best that the bayit is a model for the person's future life, though his membership has a definite time horizon and he knows he will leave the bayit upon graduation. I think the attitude of a chavurah member is, at its best, that the chavurah is his community, the place and way he will build his Jewish life, together with the other chaverim, and perhaps build a new Jewish life style. The community is potentially, as one's permanent home.

Despite this limitation, the campus batim are important communities, and some have much in common with the chavurot. However, a few are not so much collective communities as substitutes for Hillels, planning programs and serving the needs of the larger campus Jewish community. This distinction helped suggest a serious question for all of us, one also raised for the chavurot at the Mishpatim retreat: what is the essence of chavurah? How do the more serious campus batim differ from the less serious ones? How do Chavurat Shalom, the New York Chavurot, and Fabrangen differ from phoney chavurot or from simple study groups within congregations? (Of course these distinctions are somewhat artificial -- the essential element characterizes the incipient batim and the study groups as well

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*Richard Friedman is a member of the Fabrangen and a law student. He wrote this article for the chavurot newsletter, Kesher.*

as the established batim and chavurot, but to a lesser degree.) I think it is not merely the warmth between members which characterized a chavurah at its best, but the sharing of an enterprise to which a substantial portion of its energies are devoted and which has a heavy influence in shaping the lives of its members. For the serious havurot this enterprise is the joint building of the members' own Jewish lives and perhaps a model new Jewish life style. For the serious batim it is the more limited goal of continuing a viable community for Jews at a certain stage of their lives.

The vagueness and the nature of this distinction between the serious and the less serious groups, whether havurot or batim, has, I believe, an important consequence: that the level of communication and sharing among existing chavurot and batim and the effort to propagate the chavurah idea should be limited. First, if the sense of self of the existing groups is so poorly defined, then energies are better devoted to the group than to propagating and organizing chavurot, the group has less to offer to other individuals and groups, and the application of energies to propagating the chavurah idea and to contacting other chavurot may unintentionally change the shape of the group. Second, if the sense of self is limited to the process of sharing an enterprise, and is hazy about the substance of ideology, theology, relations among chaverim, life style, study, and tfilot, then the essence of the group cannot be communicated to large numbers of people, and cannot be communicated through a print medium. Indeed, since that essence is more the centripetal joint creative process and less the substantive product, it is somewhat antithetical to propagation or proselytization and also to sharing with other groups.

The groups should largely be left each to shape its content by itself. Communication, by conferences, joint retreats, or journals like Kesher, tends to bring people together, into a single community. It leads to a situation where issues are raised and defined and problems are solved in the larger arena of the movement, rather than within each chavurah separately. This does not suggest isolation, liquidation of Kesher, or discontinuing NACHAS gatherings and Weiss' Farm retreats, but perhaps there should be only one NACHAS conference per year, and Kesher should remain limited to six issues of the present size. Instead, batim should emphasize internal discussions, retreats limited to members of the bayit, and perhaps an occasional joint retreat with one other bayit. NACHAS conferences should be less convocations of group members and more opportunities for groups to meet each other as groups. Perhaps various programs or services could be delegated to different batim to plan. The suggestion by Michael Strassfeld, elsewhere in this issue, that some Weiss' Farm retreat discussions be arranged as culmination, comparison, and synthesis sessions after preparatory discussions on the same topic in each chavurah might be another way of encouraging cross-fertilization while maintaining the focus on the chavurah as the primary unit. Thus even conferences and joint retreats could help sustain the process of joint creative enterprise central to serious chavurot and batim. This suggestion will not satisfy the strong fears of isolation and the psychic needs for contact expressed by many of the NACHAS participants at the closing meeting, but it may be necessary for the orderly growth of strong chavurot.

## THE ESSENES

*Here is some interesting background material on the forerunners of the kibbutz—the Essenes. By the end of the first century B.C.E. their main group was located on the northwestern shore of the Dead Sea region, and was organized as a quasi-monastic order. Other branches of the order were scattered throughout the countryside. According to Philo the Essenes were never numerous; in his day they numbered about 4,000. The members of the brotherhood lived in monastic communities from which, with few exceptions, women were excluded. They lived austere lives, supporting themselves by manual labor, generally agricultural, and holding everything in common ownership. This account, written sometime from 30 B.C. to 40 A.D. by Philo, was taken from The Judaic Tradition, edited by Nahum Glatzer. Read through this description and discover some of the kibbutz's roots.*

### WAYS OF LIFE

The first thing about these people (Essenes) is that they live in villages and avoid the cities because of the iniquities which have become inveterate among city dwellers, for they know that their company would have a deadly effect upon their own souls, like a disease brought by a pestilential atmosphere. Some of them labor on the land and others pursue such crafts as cooperate with peace and so benefit themselves and their neighbors. They do not hoard gold and silver or acquire great slices of land because they desire the revenues therefrom, but provide what is needed for the necessary requirements of life.

For while they stand almost alone in the whole of mankind in that they have become moneyless and landless by deliberate action rather than by lack of good fortune, they are esteemed exceedingly rich, because they judge frugality with contentment to be, as indeed it is, an abundance of wealth. As for darts, javelins, daggers, or the helmet, breastplate or shield, you could not find a single manufacturer of them, nor, in general, any person making weapons or engines or plying any industry concerned with war, nor, indeed, any of the peaceful kind, which easily lapse into vice, for they have not the vaguest idea of commerce either wholesale or retail or marine, but pack the inducements to covetousness off in disgrace.

### TEACHINGS

As for philosophy they abandon the logical part of quibbling verbalists as unnecessary for the acquisition of virtue, and the physical to visionary prayers as beyond the grasp of human nature, only retaining that part which treats philosophically of the existence of God and the creation of the universe. But the ethical part they study very industriously, taking for their trainers the laws of their fathers, which could not possibly have been conceived by the human soul without divine inspiration. They are trained in piety, holiness, justice, domestic and civic conduct, knowledge of what is truly good, or evil, or indifferent, and how to choose what they should and avoid the opposite, taking for their defining standards these three, love of God, love of virtue, love of man.

### COMMUNITY OF GOODS

They all have a single treasury and common disbursements: their clothes are held in common and also their food through their institutions of public meals. In no other community can we find the custom of sharing roof, life and board more firmly established in actual practice. And that is no more than one would expect. For all the wages which they earn in the day's work they do not keep as their private property, but throw them into the common stock

and allow the benefit thus accruing to be shared by those who wish to use it. The sick are not neglected because they cannot provide anything, but have the cost of their treatment lying ready in the common stock, so that they can meet expenses out of the greater wealth in full security. To the elder men too is given the respect and care which real children give to their parents, and they receive from countless hands and minds a full and generous maintenance for their latter years.



*The following is actually the text of the Garin Gezer brochure. It is their "official" statement of purpose.*

Garin Gezer Gimmel is a kvutza of people who are making Aliya to Kibbutz Gezer in September, 1975. We will be joining Garin Aleph and Garin Bet as an integral part, and together work to reestablish Kibbutz Gezer. Kibbutz Gezer is a physically established kibbutz that was abandoned in the summer of 1973 as a result of internal social problems. Garin Gezer Aleph settled at Kibbutz Gezer in January, 1974 to reestablish a community there. Garin Gezer Bet made Aliya in September, 1974.

Throughout the three years of the Garin's development, the Ichud Kibbutz Movement has given both support and encouragement and will provide Gezer with material, educational and technical aid until it is once again self-sufficient. The Garin is also officially recognized and supported by American Habonim - a labor Zionist youth movement - which will maintain an ongoing relationship with Kibbutz Gezer over the years.

Prior to settling at Gezer, Garin Gimmel may spend a period of time at another kibbutz for agricultural training and Hebrew instruction. Once at Gezer, following a brief period of time, the members of Garin Gimmel will become full members of the Kibbutz.

#### WHO WE ARE

The sixty members and seven children that compose Garin Aleph, Bet and Gimmel come from a variety of backgrounds. Some of us have been involved with the socialist Zionist youth movements such as Habonim. Others have come to the Garin with no "movement" attachments. Most of us have experienced the reality of kibbutz life, having spent time on various kibbutzim in Israel for periods of three months to two years, a factor which has grounded the dreams of the Garin within a realistic framework. We find ourselves liking the concepts of kibbutz but critical of many of the particular kibbutzim we have experienced. The average age of Garin members is 25, with a range of 19-40, including married couples and single people. What brings us together is our vision of building our home and our lives on a new kibbutz.

#### WHAT WE BELIEVE

It is our desire to create at Gezer a humane, flexible and socialist community. We realize that the responsibility of the individual to the community is matched in importance only by the responsibility of the community to the needs of the individual.

We would like to believe that pooling our sensibilities and sensitivities toward making the decisions that govern our lives can be far more satisfying than the atomized existence that most of us have experienced. Questions such as: the individual versus the community, male/female roles, child rearing, culture, etc. have been discussed and will continue to be discussed and implemented on an ongoing basis.

Most of us also feel that as individuals and Jews, North America limits our ability to fulfill ourselves. One decision we have made is to maintain Kashrut: positively for ourselves, and also so as not to exclude from our community those who observe this basic mitzvah.

Flexibility in communal living demands the serious consideration of individual desires for self-expression. Within this context it is our hope for the future to be able to maximize the number of people able to have work experience outside the kibbutz. This will, of course, be viewed against its social and financial feasibility vis a vis the community as a whole. The location of Gezer, midway between Tel Aviv and Jerusalem, lends itself to the fulfillment of this ideal.

## KIBBUTZ

The kibbutz, or kvutza is a voluntary collective community, mainly agricultural, in which there is no private wealth and which is responsible for all the needs of the members and their families. The kibbutz movement in Israel in 1969 numbered 93,000 people in 231 kibbutzim and kvutzot organized in several federations according to social, political, and religious outlook. The first kvutza was founded in 1909 at Deganla by a group of pioneers, who, after working at first as employees of the Palestine Land Development Company, undertook collective responsibility for the working of the farm. Another group, which started work at Kinneret in the same year, became an independent kvutza in 1913. By 1914 there were eleven kvutzot established on Jewish National Fund land under the responsibility of the Zionist Organization, and the number grew to 29 by the end of 1918. The early kvutzot had small memberships based upon the idea that the community should be small enough to constitute a kind of enlarged family. During the Third Aliya, after World War I, when larger numbers of pioneering settlers (halutzim) arrived, Shlomo Lavie and others proposed the establishment of large, self-sufficient villages, combining agriculture with industry, for which the name "kibbutz" was used. The first of this type was Ein Harod, founded in 1921, and many others followed. Later, however, the distinction between the two terms almost disappeared.

The kibbutzim received their manpower mainly from the pioneering youth movements abroad and, in their turn, provided the movements with a practical ideal of pioneering settlement on the land in order to make a major contribution to the building of the Jewish National Home and create a model and a basis for the socialist society of the future. They played an important part in expanding the map of Jewish settlement and safeguarding the growing community. In the late 1930's many were set up overnight on the Tower and Stockade plan so as to forestall official obstruction and Arab attack. The kibbutzim served as bases for the Haganah defense force and later the Palmach, its commando section. Most of the new villages established under emergency conditions during and immediately after World War II, especially in the Negev, were kibbutzim. By the establishment of independence, they numbered 149 out of the 291 Jewish villages in the country.

In 1948 and 1949 the momentum of kibbutz expansion continued: out of 175 new villages founded during the two years, 79 were kibbutzim. The Jews from Muslim countries and survivors of the Holocaust who arrived in enormous numbers during the early years of the state were not favorably disposed to the kibbutz idea, however, and most of them preferred to settle in moshavim. Youngsters born or brought up in Israel, including the second or third generation from older kibbutzim and graduates of Youth Aliya and Israel youth movements, became more prominent among the founders of new kibbutzim, especially in the Negev, and after the Six-Day War (1967), in the Golan Heights.

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*The Encyclopedia Judaica provides us with this definition and history of Kibbutz.*

## THE CHARACTER OF THE KIBBUTZ

The kibbutz is a unique product of the Zionist labor movement and the Jewish national revival. It was not conceived theoretically as an escapist or utopian project: it was developed by Jewish workers inspired by ideas of social justice as an integral part of the Zionist effort to resettle the homeland. Ever since its inception, the kibbutz movement has played a pioneering role in the economic, political, cultural, and security activities required to carry out that purpose. The movement is composed of people from different countries and backgrounds, and of varying political beliefs. Some communities were inspired by A.D. Gordon's ethical Jewish socialist philosophy, which emphasized the importance of identification with nature and of physical labor as the supreme human value. Others cherished the tradition of the Gedud ha-Avodah of the early 1920's, which regarded itself as a militant constructive task force. Others, again, do not regard themselves as a part of the socialist movement, while a number of kibbutzim have been established by religious Jews and combine communal life with the fulfillment of the laws of the Torah.

## ORGANIZATION

The basis of kibbutz administration is a weekly general meeting of the membership, which formulates policy, elects officers, and supervises the overall working of the community. Candidates for membership are usually accepted after a year's probation. Kibbutzim are incorporated cooperative enterprises, and generally speaking members transfer all assets, other than personal effects, to the kibbutz. If a member decides to leave he is entitled to his personal effects and, in line with a recent decision of the movement, to a cash grant proportional to the time he has been in the kibbutz. Uniform national bylaws governing individual rights in the kibbutz have been approved.

Affairs of the kibbutz are conducted by elected committees, the principal one being the secretariat, which usually consists of a secretary, treasurer, chairman of some of the key committees, the production manager, and others. There are committees in charge of education, cultural activities, questions of principle and personal problems of members, economic planning, coordination of work, and nominations. Elective positions, including managerial ones, are rotated every year or two.

The kibbutz federations provide financial assistance to their member villages through independent loan funds and national negotiation with financial and governmental institutions. They offer technical advisory services ranging from economic analysis to the planning of communal kitchens and laundries. Central purchasing and marketing services cut costs for individual kibbutzim and a special department deals with kibbutz-based industry. They operate their own psychological clinics for children (including a school for disturbed children) and, in cooperation with institutions of higher learning, offer courses in specific branches of technology, agriculture, and kibbutz management. Cultural activities range from movement-wide choirs and amateur orchestras to regional schools for adult education on a non-university and university level. The kibbutz federations are joined together in Berit ha-Tenuah ha-Kibbutzit (Kibbutz Movement Alliance), which coordinates their activities in the many areas in which

they cooperate. The three major ones jointly operate Israel's largest teachers' training college - Seminar ha-Kibbutzim. They sponsor educational and sociological research and are investigating the possibility of establishing a kibbutz-sponsored university.

Each federation an ideological center, where seminars are conducted, and publishes bulletins and journals of letters and opinion. Berit ha-Tenuah ha-Kibbutzit has established a company for the production of television material on kibbutz topics. Each federation negotiates with its kibbutzim for manpower for general movement activity, not only within the movement itself but in the Zionist and labor movements and in government service. There is an increasing degree of regional cooperation cutting across federation boundaries. This includes regional secondary schools, youth and cultural activity, and large regional economic and industrial complexes - including plants for canning, poultry slaughtering and dressing, packing and fodder preparation, cotton gins and large silos, trucking and hauling cooperatives and large regional garages.

## THE SOCIALIST IDEAL

By Yitzhak Maor

It is the ideal socialism to establish a reformed society, based on new values. Socialism strives for the abolition of classes, privileges, discrimination and all social, national, racial, religious and sexual subjugation. Socialism aims at fraternity between men and solidarity between nations, at a life of peace, creativity, culture, equality and spiritual freedom. These are the fundamental values of socialism, to which can be added secondary values for the attainment of the supreme objectives. The ways in which socialism can be attained are many and varied: there are parliamentary-political, economic, legal, cultural-educational and constructive-social ways. It may be said however that the democratic, free, humanist socialists face one problem in advance: the use of means - for the attainment of noble aim - which run counter to the very essence, nature and spirit of that aim will inevitably besmirch the aim itself and lessen the prospects of attaining it.

### THE KIBBUTZ AS A ROAD TO SOCIALISM

The kibbutz in Israel should be regarded as one of the ways of achieving the socialist society (apart from its national tasks of constructing the country and realizing Zionism). The main importance of the kibbutz lies in the fact that it seeks to realize the social ideal of socialism in every-day life by establishing general values as the foundation stones on which the life of the kibbutz is based. If we add to this the values on which the kibbutz builds up its economy and society, we could suggest the following definition:

The kibbutz is an organized society, based on the principles of full cooperation in production and consumption, in work and in life, based on the utmost extent of mutual help and on the mutual responsibility of all members in all spheres of life; it strives to realize the principle of the equal value of all men and the equal value of work (every type of work) while providing for the personal independence and spiritual freedom of every individual.

And now if we break down this definition to its elements, we shall arrive at the following list of values: cooperation, work, equality, freedom, solidarity (mutual responsibility), friendship (mutual aid), etc. These are general basic values, from which stem further values as ways and means to realize and implement these fundamental values. For example, if we take the value of mutual responsibility in all spheres of life, one of the values which stems from this is communal education for the children, and then there is the kibbutz's support for the members' aging parents or needy relatives etc.

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*The piece above is excerpted from a longer article by Yitzhak Maor. The article comes from the collection, Kibbutz: A New Society?, published by Ichud Habonim, Tel Aviv.*

Education to an acceptance of values is of the utmost importance within the kibbutz. But how can one make certain that the values of the kibbutz will serve as the basis for the education of the entire generation growing up in our country, and not only for the young people growing up within the kibbutz itself? A clear answer to this question may be found in one of the guidelines laid down by Joseph Bussel regarding the path of the kibbutz: "A style of living can serve as an example only if one invest one's entire soul in it, even if the public at large is alien to it." In other words if you wish to get through to other people, you must first be true to yourself, to your own ways, and your own doctrine and abide by its precepts. If you do so and act in this way, you may well inspire people far removed from you; they will seek to warm themselves by the light of the kibbutz society, even though they will not be prepared to join its ranks and live in it. This condition is demanded of every educator, whether individual or collective.

"We are pioneers whether we wish to be or not," Joseph Bussel adds. "The concept of the kibbutz is entirely new; our entire life in the kibbutz, in its very essence, in the concept of the social revolution which it personifies in its life. While nothing is accomplished without endeavour, and we must have the strength and the moral courage to swim against the stream when the need arises, this does not mean that it is always desirable to swim against the stream just as a matter of principle. However, when our values and our outlook are not born on the waves of time, it is our duty as pioneers and as revolutionaries to strive towards our aim and our social objective. There is much that is in "the spirit of the times," that we will not reject such as: development, industry, technology, modern know-how, professional training, higher education, etc., for they are all important to the kibbutz. However, in themselves they are not sufficient, since "the spirit and the soul are also vital to us" (Joseph Bussel), meaning - the spirit of the kibbutz and the soul of its values. In this sense, we can be the pioneers of the social revolution.

## FUNDAMENTAL SOCIALIST VALUES By Baruch Azania

### MUTUAL RESPONSIBILITY

One particular element of kibbutz life is the most typical of it: the principle of complete mutual responsibility. Mutual responsibility is not to be equated with mutual help. The two differ from each other both qualitatively and quantitatively. When an individual finds that his ability to work is impaired because of illness, family problems or other objective reasons, mutual aid will help him bear the burden. However, mutual aid does not propose to grant an individual complete equality, and this creates problems.

Of course, even socialism, based as it is on mutual responsibility, cannot do away with differences in man's inner feelings. It will be a mistake to assume that in the kibbutz the man of seventy necessarily feels as contented as the man of forty. The elderly, like the young, receive from the kibbutz everything they need - food, clothing and shelter - but there is one basic difficulty: a man's own estimation of his contribution to communal life. Kibbutz society has not yet attained that peak of perfection where an individual will not suffer psychologically because of the differences between his objective condition and that of others (as in the case of the elderly and the young, regarding work capacity).

Mutual responsibility is based on a social philosophy which considers it unjust that a man's ability to support himself should depend on his ability to work. The kibbutz makes every effort to differentiate between the objective ability to work and a man's will to work, to do his utmost in the course of his day of labor.

The philosophy of mutual responsibility in no way implies a separation between man's right to existence and his willingness to make an effort at work. Quite the opposite, the kibbutz's unwritten constitution is most severe regarding the appearance of wilful idleness.

### THE KIBBUTZ FACES CAPITALISM

The kibbutz is surrounded by a capitalist world, which holds a social philosophy completely opposed to the principle of mutual responsibility. This philosophy claims that man is entitled to everything in proportion to his power and ability, and that an urchin shoe-lace vendor can become a millionaire. It replaces the feudal attitude, which considered inheritance the only valid basis of wealth. It argues that society's wealth can always be redivided. Just as the wealthy heir can waste his inheritance, so can the propertyless gain riches. It believes in a direct connection between a man's achievements (wealth, security, status) and his actual work ability (the more the latter, the more the former). Further

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*This excerpt from an article by Baruch Azania is taken from a booklet entitled Kibbutz: A New Society?, published by Ichud Habonim in Israel.*

the capitalist system values mental ability far and above physical ability, out of all reasonable proportion. Every social system in the world, which values mental above physical effort is fundamentally based on a capitalist philosophy.

Possibly, this is the most difficult of the kibbutz's many educational tasks: to hold on to the individual who believes he has greater opportunities under capitalism, and to bring him to the point where he will identify with socialism willingly and in his own personal life.

The socialist cell must educate people to identify with it, and this must be done in competition with capitalism - a larger system, better known and, on the face of it, self-justifying. As long as capitalist society exists the skilled individual can be tempted to think: "What good is the kibbutz to me? Possibly this society is good for those who lack ability to produce. However, I am more talented, and for me this is not worth while."

In addition to the question of ideals there is another, objective, factor which helps the individual identify with the life of the kibbutz; this is the feeling of security as opposed to the social insecurity which prevails under capitalism. Under capitalism the man of thirty is able to achieve a great deal, perhaps because of his ability, and perhaps also because of an economic boom prevailing at the time. However, as time wears on, physiological weakening can cause a decline in his position as can economic slump over which he has no control. In this respect the kibbutz way of life offers social security, since his means of livelihood is guaranteed him no matter what his personal difficulties, and if the community as a whole should face a crisis, he will suffer no more, no less, than his fellow. The difficulty is that this is not usually felt until a man reaches an advanced age. The problem is already vaguely understood at an early age, but this is not enough. In some cases the value of social security is understood too late in life for a radical change to be made.



## KVUTSAT SHA'AL - COLLECTIVE URBAN SETTLEMENT IN KARMIEL

*The description below was written on the first anniversary of Kvutsat Sha'al. Although the tone of this article is optimistic, Sha'al lasted only three more years, finally disbanding in the spring of 1972. The reasons for its failure are many and complicated. Among them was the basic problem of man power. They tried to take on all the responsibilities of a kibbutz (and more) and didn't have the people to do it. The information below will give you a picture of what the chaverim at Sha'al attempted to accomplish. The material comes from a 1969 issue of Hamaapil/Furrows.*

Kvutsat Shaal, the newest project of North American Habonim in Israel, is today the only permanently established urban collective in the country. Located in the new development town of Karmiel, the members of Shaal have constructed a new way of life based upon the essential principles of kibbutz life, but reconstructed so as to have meaning in a new pioneering urban environment.

Garin Shaal Aleph was established in September, 1964, as an official settlement group of Ichud Habonim, as a response to the interest among Zionist young adults, in a chalutzic (pioneering) alternative to traditional kibbutz settlement. Far from negating the historic and contemporary importance of the kibbutz movement, these young people sought a way to contribute to the future impact of the collective movement on Israel and on the world. In an age of rapid technological and urban development, the kibbutz movement had done little to encourage the adaptation of its ideology to the urban environment. Furthermore, the members of Garin Shaal believed that the forefront of the new chalutzit of the 60's and 70's would be in the development towns of the country.

In the same year that Garin Shaal was taking its first organizational steps in America, the settlement of Karmiel was beginning in an area of the Western Galilee nearly totally devoid of Jewish population. The settlement of the new town was based upon the principles of true integration of populations, and indeed the finest elements among Israeli young adults and committed new immigrants were to be attracted to it. It was natural, therefore, that the fate of Karmiel and Kvutsat Shaal should become intertwined.

In addition to the American olim who founded Shaal in 1968, the kvutsa has begun the process of attracting and absorbing Israeli families and single people to its ranks. The kvutsa sees its doors open to all people who share its vision in the future of urban collective life, regardless of country or origin or background. In the future the kvutsa will be joined by an additional settlement group from the United States (Garin Shaal Bet) and by a second group of settlers from South Africa.

Economically, the kvutsa is organized through the institution of a kupa m'shutfet (central communal fund), to which all income is channelled and from which all expenses are paid. Like the kibbutz, Shaal life is organized on the principle of shituf maleh (full economic collectivism). Members of the kvutsa have their needs cared for through a combination of taksivim ishim (personal monthly budgets) and taksivim kvutsatiim (group budgets). The taksiv ishi covers part of the members' food expenses, clothing, and most incidentals. The group budgets, on the other hand, cover expenses such as rent, utilities, communal meals (on Shabbat and holidays), upkeep of communal property, running of the moadon-chadar ochel (communal hall-dining room), upkeep of an open communal store, and the budgets of the various committees.

The ultimate decision-making body of the kvutsa is the asefa klalit (general meeting) which assembles weekly. Much of the practical work, however, is done in the framework of the vaadot (committees). These include a mazkirut (external general secretary, internal general secretary, treasurer), vaadat chevra, vaadat shivayon (equality), vaadat tarbut (cultural), vaadat mifalim (communal projects), and vaadat kniot (purchasing). In addition, one chaver of the kvutsa serves as sadran avoda (work coordinator), and is responsible for the work schedules of all of the members.

One of the basic principles of Shaal life is that all work and occupations (whether skilled or unskilled) bear the same intrinsic work, regardless of the monetary reward they bring. Thus members of the kvutza include factory workers, psychologists, teachers, office workers, scientists, technicians, and social workers. Each chaver is encouraged to develop in his occupation to the best of his ability. Nevertheless, Shaal sees the need to develop mifalim (communal projects) of its own, with the aim of employing most of the chaverim within Shaal enterprises. The synthesis of these two aims requires the development of economic projects, suited to the interests of the chaverim of the kvutza. Today two mifalim have been begun, and several more are in the investigation and/or planning stages. A successful Israeli-American summer camp has been established, and a new way of more completely integrating teenage American visitors into Israeli life has been developed. American participants live in the homes of Israeli teenagers of their own age, and together they participate in a full camping, touring, and educational program. In addition, a small mifal sriga (knitting workshop) has been begun with the aim of employing chaverot with small children in interesting work at home.

Women in Shaal, of course, enjoy full and equal rights. In addition, their work day is appreciably shortened while their children are of pre-school age. Responsibility for communal sherutim (service areas) and secretarial work are primarily in their hands.

Although Shaal has, on principle, decided to send its children to the public schools of Karmiel, the Vaadat Chinuch (education committee) is responsible for their after school hours and supplemental education. Plans call for the establishment of chevrot y'ladim ("children's society's") for children of school age and a kvutza nursery for pre-school children. Based upon the desire for true integration into the town, the nursery will also accept children of families not belonging to Shaal.

In short, Kvutza Shaal is on its way to fulfilling its primary aims: growth of the kvutza, establishment of kvutza projects, and influence on the life and development of a new urban community. New chaverim and garinim are being sought, new mifalim are being investigated, and chaverim are strongly influencing the social, cultural, and political life of Karmiel.

#### SHABBAT IN KVUTSAT SHAAL

One of the central institutions in the urban kibbutz is the group celebration of the Shabbat. Particularly at a time when a large number of the chaverim are working outside of Karmiel, the Shabbat is the time when all of the kvutza comes together for relaxation and social and cultural activities.

On Friday evening all the members of the kvutza and their guests (there are usually a large number) gather in the moadon for the kabbalat Shabbat and evening meal. Each week a different chaver prepared a kabbala that actively involves a number of other people in readings, singing, chalil or guitar, lighting of the candles, kiddush, etc. Group singing often accompanies or follows the meal. Later in the evening, after the children are asleep, an Oneg Shabbat planned by the Vaadat Tarbut takes place. These programs have included parties, game nights, serious internal discussion, play readings, trips to neighboring kibbutzim, visits by groups, and lectures.

On Saturday, lunch is again eaten in communal style in the moadon, and most of the day is devoted to trips to the beach or other vaad tarbut outings and discussions with visitors to the kvutza.

## DECISION-MAKING BY CONSENSUS

For the past two years (including the last year of Garin Shaal Aleph in America), the Kvutza has been experimenting with a method of decision-making called consensus. Motions may be brought to the asefa klalit by individual chaverim or by committees. All major decisions in the asefa are taken by a consensus vote: i.e., in order to pass all "yes" and "abstention" votes must be cast; no "negative" votes. In other words, all chaverim who have an opinion and who feel that the question under discussion is important for them must vote "yes", or else the decision is delayed. Delayal in this case means that a "consensus committee" is set up on an ad hoc basis, in order to work out a compromise acceptable to all on the particular issue.

The decision to undertake the consensus method on an experimental basis was based upon the desire to give every chaver a maximum voice in those issues that are most important to him. It was, of course, understood from the beginning that the success of this method would depend on several inter-related factors: (1) the ability of the group to remain flexible and to reach suitable compromises, (2) the use of the "no" vote by individual chaverim with great discretion, i.e., only in those cases where they indeed feel strongly and feel directly concerned, and (3) the ability of the group to nevertheless make rapid decisions when necessary.

During the course of this two-year experiment a great deal of evaluation has accompanied the use of the method. In fact, several months ago, a full day yom iyun was held on the subject. The conclusions of these evaluations were basically that, although the method had been a success in terms of providing the greatest say for the individual in those issues most closely related to his own life, change and adaptation were necessary in order to maintain maximum efficiency. The greatest advantage of the method is the security it affords to the individual; the greatest disadvantage is the amount of time and effort it demands from the individual in order to make it work properly.

Accordingly, the kvutza has elected to continue with an experiment that it considers crucial to the building of a new type of urban life, but has decided to alter the method in the following ways:

- 1.) Decisions about the accepting of candidates and members are taken by a vote of 2/3.
- 2.) Decisions relating to the procedure only are taken by 50% votes.
- 3.) Decisions on mifalim, social-political action, and communal purchasing are taken by 3/4 votes, if the consensus procedure does not yield a satisfactory compromise within 6 weeks.
- 4.) Consensus committees operate in a more dynamic fashion than originally. The proceedings are run by one individual, fulfilling the role of consensus facilitator. Many of the "committee" meetings thus actually become discussions between 2 or 3 people, and others are consulted by the facilitator only when necessary for the arriving at a successful compromise. Thus the aim becomes bringing back to the asefa a proposal acceptable to all parties.

## KARMIEL POLITICS AND KVUTSA SHAAL

For the first four years of existence, Karmiel has been governed by an appointed, professional staff, responsible to the Ministry of Housing. In addition, most other public jobs in the town have been filled on an appointment basis, as is the custom in new development towns in Israel. The rationale, in brief, is that this removes the development of the town from the world of politics until a veteran and a stable population has been developed.

The year 1969 is election year in Israel and in Karmiel as well. Although it is not yet clear whether the Ministry of Interior will grant Karmiel elected-town council status at this stage, the election campaign for the Histadrut (local moetzet hapoalim) is in full swing. In a small town in particular, the Histadrut institutions are of great importance, and an unusual amount of public interest has been focused on the Histadrut elections in Karmiel this year. While the Labor Party on a national level has maintained its unity for the elections almost completely intact (with exception of the splinter Mamshichei Rafi and Riftim groups) Karmiel has witnessed the only serious party split in the country during this period. Following the nomination of candidates for the moetzet hapolim by the authorized local party institutions, the mazkir of the party, together with 10 other central committee members left the party to present an independent list of the electorate.

Kvutsat Shaal, having defined as one of its primary purposes the positive influencing of the development town in a collective and socialist manner, has of course not been able to ignore the political area. In fact, in Israel it is within the framework of the parties in which major decisions are generally made. Nevertheless, at this stage we have rejected the notion of ideological collectivism. Votes on political issues and action require a 75% vote for passage, but individuals retain the ability to publicly dissent from the position of the group. The group, however, does have the ability to carry out the decisions of the asefa klalit on this subject.

In the case of the current local political crisis, the kvutsa has elected to take no official position with respect to the justification for an independent, non-MAARACH list. Indeed, no real agreement of this point exists. Two chaverim of the kvutsa are members of the Labor Party central committee and candidates on the party list for the moetzet hapoalim. Other chaverim are leaning toward the position of the independent list, while still a third group has decided to stay uninvolved with this particular issue. The kvutsa, as a group, has decided that its role and the role of its chaverim, regardless of which group they find themselves in, should concentrate on making the campaign and discussions issue-oriented. And there are certainly many of them: the low wage scale and dependence on Arab labor in Karmiel's mifalim; the need for a large Histadrut institution and industry in Karmiel; more attention for youth work and particularly youth movements; the development of cultural relationships with the neighboring Arab and Druze villages.

So we have made our debut in politics and political discussions. The one overwhelming and satisfying conclusion to date is that once involved our voice bears considerable importance and weight in Karmiel.

## RADICAL POLITICAL IRBUTZ IN ISRAEL by David Mandel

The concept of urban collectives has floated around Zionist circles for a long time, and history records a few failures. Discussion has resurfaced recently, with the development of an Independent radical Zionist movement, whose members are dedicated to their own self-realization through communal life in Israel and to serious socioeconomic changes in the Israeli structure. Also, the Sha'al group in Israel has received wide publicity since its establishment three years ago as a "kibbutz" of professionals who chose an urban setting. In all due respect to the Sha'al group, which has seriously pioneered a life style that looks as though it may succeed, we should differentiate between them and what we shall call the "political Irbutz\*." This concept has been proposed as not only a life style, though certainly the stability of such communes as permanent homes is crucial. The "political Irbutz" is seen primarily as a means to effect political, economic, and social change in Israeli society.

### The Kibbutz

Let us begin with a look at the history of the kibbutzim. Recent research has shown that the communal institutions of the early kibbutzim were not, as had been widely assumed, arrived at haphazardly. They were, to a large extent, calculated attempts at solving what was seen by the founding Socialist-Zionists as the crucial problem that needed to be solved in order to create any sound Jewish national existence - a base for the national economy. This meant that there had to be an organized Jewish working class, a widespread Jewish presence on the land itself, and, if the economy was to be a socialist one, ownership of these newly-created means of production by the Jewish workers themselves. The subsequent creation of the collectivist movements of different shades, and of the large Histadrut union, were the fruition of these intentions. But also on the cultural level, the work ethic that permeated the kibbutz society, its valuing of group spirit, and its nationalism, became the models for the whole society. These group-oriented values created the national conditions of production that are still the foundation of the state, and its values and goals.

The kibbutz was certainly a revolutionary vanguard movement of its time, aimed at solving the problems necessary to achieve Jewish national existence with a socialist bent. It achieved a great deal, but fell far short of bringing complete socialism to Israel, and seems unable to effectively continue the struggle today, at least on its own. In fact, socialism as a value and a goal seems lately to be less and less important and even less popular to all of Israeli society. Why?

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*\*"Irbutz" is a contraction of the Hebrew words for city and kibbutz, connoting an urban collective settlement.*

*David Mandel was National Chairman of the Radical Zionist Alliance. This article is taken from the anthology, Jewish Radicalism.*

First, there was created out of the early kibbutzim and labor movement an incredibly powerful Socialist-Zionist elite, still holding a great deal of power. For many of them, political and social reality is the same as it was fifty years ago, and a natural resentment has built up among aspiring younger leaders, and an "anti-Ideological" spirit among the young public. Private ownership has increased, but the largest private owner by far remains this gigantic labor union complex, and the fact is that it has become, to large portions of the population, oppressive.

### The Urban Problem

Take, for instance, a scenario from one of the proper development towns, created around 1960 for the masses of immigrant Jews from backward Asian and African countries. The population is, say, 95 percent Moroccan and Tunisian, totaling maybe 5,000 people. The poor educational and cultural facilities and overcrowded housing are given factors, as is the cultural gap between these citizens and many Europeans of the large cities and kibbutzim. In addition, the town's residents are trapped in poverty: Professional services are usually provided by outsiders who often do not live in the town. Except for the minority who own or work in small businesses or trades, the vast majority of the labor force are relatively unskilled workers in one of two large basic industries in the town. And here's the catch: These industries are almost always owned by the Histadrut, the union supposedly representing the workers it hires. There is an obvious contradiction. Furthermore, the Histadrut bureaucracy is controlled totally by outsiders, and relatively little has been tried in these unskilled factories in the way of worker participation in management. Needless to say, there are few strikes in these industries. Another obvious result: There is a good deal of resentment - when elections come around the only anti-Histadrut opposition is the chauvinist right-wing and religious parties; and they receive large support in these towns in the absence of any effective left opposition. This only hurts the chances of these towns receiving new investments from bureaucratic Histadrut decision-makers.

### Kibbutz-Town Interaction

And the kibbutzim? Often a development town like the typical one described above is literally surrounded by kibbutzim. And usually the social contact is zilch. If anything, the kibbutzim hire some workers from the town, not the best example of socialism at work. The standard of living on the kibbutz is way above that of the town. And the kibbutz movement is the backbone of the labor bureaucracy that ostensibly prevents the development of these "development towns." In terms of the modern social and economic problems of Israel, the kibbutz is removed from the struggle for socialism, no longer in the vanguard, in fact, and is a social and economic elite. The younger kibbutz members, if they stay on the kibbutz, are less concerned about the general struggle for socialism, taking even the life style more or less for granted. The kibbutz succeeded in its revolutionary purpose of creating an organized Jewish working class, and, in fact, the present state and its institutions, but is not geared to solving the problems of today, found in the development towns and in sections of the large cities. The kibbutz is still valuable as an example of communal life style, and even as an economic institution; and there is a potential for the kibbutzim assuming once more an active role in the large struggle. But something will have to stimulate this from the outside.

A more active struggle towards true socialism will come about with the development of a movement of lower-class workers in the cities and towns;

a movement of organized leftist labor against the Histadrut bureaucracy, either from within or without the existing organizations. Progressives of the old left parties and intellectuals may support such a movement, but it will somehow have to generate a momentum of its own. The recent Israeli Black Panther Incidents were certainly a hopeful sign, even though only a small faction of the movement talks in terms of class conflict as well as struggle for ethnic equality.

#### Problems of Urban Collectives

Here enters the idea of the radical Irbutz, aimed at agitating for such a socialist movement by actually involving itself in the urban setting with its problems. They are obvious immediate problems in creating an urban commune that will succeed merely to exist, let alone build a revolution. The Sha'al group has always been in danger of falling apart communally. Let us analyze why this difficulty exists: The isolation of the kibbutz, with its obvious political disadvantages, does, however, create a ready-made setting for a successful community - owning its own means of production, working and consuming together, and apart from others. Any urban group is many times less isolated, making it very difficult to just stick together. Furthermore, a group like Sha'al, which neither owns its own means of production nor works together, has only the social bonds holding it together. From the outset this has been recognized as the major problem of the group, and for three years the chaverim(ot) have claimed to be looking for a project which could involve the work of a large proportion of the members. This may be impossible, since most of the members joined specifically for their own personal occupational reasons; many even work outside the town in which they live. It remains to be seen whether such a group, held together only by strong social bonds, will succeed.

#### Two Possible Solutions

Two possible solutions to this problem of lack of an important binding force in an urban collective had been proposed. Both are aimed directly at affecting politically the surrounding community and the country. (Some Sha'al members are somewhat politically involved in the town, but the group as a whole has chosen not to involve itself).

One idea has been to have a group enter a town or city and, from the very start, own and work at its own means of production, a factory of sorts. One such proposal now in the planning stages is for a print shop that could serve as the nucleus for information and education for a national radical movement and serve the community at the same time. Of course the group would actively involve itself in the politics of the surrounding community. Problems and advantages of this approach include the following: Owning such separate means of production as a group would somewhat isolate the group from the surrounding workers but would serve very well to keep the group itself together and dedicated to its goals. Establishing such a project would be difficult, however, requiring capital at the very beginning, and if successful, immediate expansion. Help would have to come from somewhere on the outside, and the question is where? Probably not the Jewish Agency-Histadrut establishment that usually helps immigrants' enterprises.

A second idea is for a group whose primary motivation is the political one to live in a town, and all find jobs in the town, with many, if not all, as laborers in the factories. This would involve little initial capital and has the advantage of providing close and real proximity with the workers, the most advantageous situation for agitation. There is no common economic enterprise to help the group together other than consumption, but common political action could play such a role to some extent. If a basic requirement in the establishment of the group is primacy of political motivations over personal and professional ones, then there is something concrete on which to build the community. This plan could also bring in new members very easily, even from the town itself. It has been a question of considerable debate whether such a commune should include professionals or only laborers. Most, however, are willing to include professionals to a certain extent: A majority of the members should be non-professional, and those who are should work within the town itself, and as radicals in their profession, thus serving the town in an important way. The crucial requirement would be that all members consider the political purpose of the community more important than professional and personal aspirations (high priority to a successful and happy community is assumed).

#### The Need for Garinim

Experiments along these lines will have to be planned carefully, pioneering the development of communal institutions adaptable to urban life - strong enough to hold the groups together but flexible enough to allow the necessary interaction with the surrounding community. The biggest drawback, however, is that neither idea has yet been attempted. More and more radical Zionists are arriving in Israel all the time, and more are becoming active in movements outside of Israel. No garinim oriented strongly toward these or other possible plans have been formed, though many people are discussing the ideas. Disillusionment often sets in once a radical arrives in Israel and sees that little has been done, that many like him are also floating around.

Serious groundwork would be laid by those in Israel already, and contacts should be made with Israelis ready to participate in such projects. And in America and other countries, more serious efforts need be made to form groups dedicated to these ideals - groups that will arrive together in Israel to set up their communities. These groups have not come into being, often because there were not enough committed people in one place to form a real group. In spite of the disadvantages of lack of personal contact, perhaps we should form mail-order garinim; gatherings can be held, summers spent together, and perhaps a year either in America or Israel before the foundation of the community. We are spread out, and in spite of some growth, are not becoming a mass movement. No one will know if these nice ideas can work until we try, and that means serious commitment and organization of garinim.



## THE MOSHAV SHITUFI

The Moshav Shitufi is a community in which the business or farm is completely collectivised, whereas the family, as a family, retains its individual existence, and live its own separate private family life each in its own fashion. This is a very broad definition, and in order to understand the Moshav Shitufi, one has to start qualifying and amplifying the definition immediately.

No less than the Kibbutz, the Moshav Shitufi is based on a distribution of its resources in accordance with the individual needs of the family, and not in accordance with the earnings or contribution in work of the individual. What this really means will become clear as we study the actual distribution of these resources, but in effect the principle of the Kibbutz "to each according to his needs, and from each according to his capabilities" is equally the basis of the Moshav Shitufi, and thus differentiates it completely from the individual type of settlement like the Moshav, where each man receives only that which he earns from his own labour on his own farm. The Moshav Shitufi is an attempt to strike a balance between the need for rationalised collective work, and the demand of the individual worker for as large a measure of self-determination as possible in regard to that part of his life which is not devoted to earning his living. It is sometimes called a compromise between the individual Moshav and the collective Kibbutz, but this is only partly true, for the Moshav Shitufi is rapidly developing characteristics of its own as a product of neither one nor the other, but as an entirely new social experiment in the art of living.

The first two moshavim shittufiyim - Kefar Hittim in Lower Galilee and Moledet in the Gliboa district - were founded in 1936-37, and after World War II many of the demobilized soldiers who settled on the land chose this form of settlement. In 1970 there were 22 moshavim shittufiyim with a total population of 4,200. To coordinate their activities, the moshavim shittufiyim maintain an inter-movement committee.

The Moledet Group was founded with the idea of creating a smallholders' settlement. During its existence at Beer Tuvia, when for the first time the group lived together as an independent and organised group, the impermanence of its position there, and other physical conditions, imposed the necessity of maintaining a communal existence no different from that of any group preparing for settlement as a Kibbutz.

The original members of Moledet who voted in favor of establishing a Moshav Shitufi were not without experience in other types of social organisation in the settlements of Palestine. In the first place they had come from Germany, from a society of unrestricted individuality and free enterprise. In Palestine, first at Nahalal and then at Beer Tuvia, the members had seen how the concept of the Moshav, while preserving a great part of the individualism to which they had been accustomed, nevertheless qualified it with co-operative ideas. At the same time the Moshav Shitufi was voted upon, they

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*This informational article on Moshav Shitufi is taken from two sources: The Encyclopedia Judaica and Moledeth, A Story of the Moshav Shitufi, by Lionel Feitelberg.*

themselves were living a completely communal life, in which not only work and social services but even the services of the household were collectivised.

#### LIFE IN THE MOSHAV SHITUFI

The definition of the Moshav Shitufi so far attempted in fact tells us almost nothing about its way of life, and in order to understand this new system, we must study Moledet in all its aspects, at work and at home; and when we have done so, we will be able to redefine it in terms of its own ideology, and to differentiate it from both the Kibbutz and the Moshav.

In the Moshav Shitufi the farm is completely collectivised and is worked and managed exactly as in the Kibbutz. All the male labour of the settlement falls under the authority and direction of the Work Committee, which allocates labour of the various branches. This is done every evening in respect to all work for the following day. The heads of the various branches of the farm submit their labour requirements daily to the Labour Organiser, and those members of the settlement who have any special requests or complaints, do the same. Weighing up all these factors, the labour organiser finally makes up his list, which is then displayed, and it is the duty of every member to consult this list in order to ascertain where he is to work next day. As in the Kibbutz, most of the workers have permanent work places, but seasonal requirements demand the switching of a considerable part of the labour from one branch to another at different times, and the task of the labour organiser and the Work Committee is to strike a balance between the demands of the separate branches of the farm and the labour power available, whilst always trying to give consideration to individual likes and dislikes.

This distribution of labour applies to male labour only, for the position of the woman in the Moshav Shitufi is quite different from that in either the Kibbutz or the Moshav, and will have to be studied separately and in some detail later.

While work is collectivised, however, the status of the family is completely individual. Each family lives on its own in a separate house; it maintains its own kitchen, and the parents and children sit around the family table at meals. The mother cooks, cares for her own children, sews, cleans and generally maintains the household. The family can choose its own menus and the sort of clothes that it wants to wear. But even this system of individual family life is to some extent subject to disciplines and qualifications, for work is not the only part of the community's life that is collectivised and communal. The community maintains various institutions for the common good, and provides many social services, and for the maintenance of these, the women have to give certain set hours of work every day, which labour ultimately also falls under the control of the Work Committee.

#### PROPERTY IN THE MOSHAV SHITUFI

The basis of the Moshav Shitufi, like that of the Kibbutz, is the collective ownership of all the assets of the settlement. This distinguishes the Moshav Shitufi fundamentally from the Moshav proper, where the basis is private

ownership. The profits and losses of the community are also collective.

But Moledet is not a Kibbutz, and the principle of private assets is also recognised. Inside the family home for instance, the family possessions, furniture, household goods, clothes and whatever else the family possesses, are privately owned. There is no reason why a family should not possess private means as well, although we shall have to consider how a basis of equality between members is maintained, despite such differences, and how the value of private property is strictly limited so as not to upset the social basis of the community.

The community owns all the fixed assets and property, but in addition, it also maintains certain communal institutions, such as the school and kindergarten, to use which the members are entitled as of right, and for which they make no personal contribution other than their ordinary day's work. This applies equally to other social services.

## MOSHAV-COOPERATIVE FARMING

Moshav or Moshav Ovedim is a cooperative smallholders' village in Eretz Israel combining some of the features of both cooperative and private farming. The idea was evolved during World War I in the quest for a form of settlement that would not only express national and social aspirations on the basis of collective principles like the kibbutz, but also provide scope for individual initiative and independent farm management. The idea was given definite shape in a pamphlet Yissud Moshevei Ovedim ("The Establishment of Workers' Villages," 1919) by Eliezer Joffe, who formulated the social and economic principles on which the moshav should be based: nationally owned land, mutual aid, cooperative purchasing and marketing, and the family as the fundamental unit. Those principles were further developed in the writings of Yizhak Vilkanski, the agronomist, who dealt with the economic structure desirable for the moshav and regarded it as the appropriate answer to the needs of mass settlement. This evaluation was fully vindicated after the establishment of the State of Israel, when tens of thousands of new immigrant families were settled on the land in hundreds of moshavim.

At first the moshav economy was based on mixed farming, which, it was expected, would supply most of the farmer's needs and give him greater stamina to withstand agricultural fluctuations and crises than the single crop farm. It would also permit the work to be spread out evenly over the year, a point of particular importance since the settler and his family had to cultivate the farm by themselves without the aid of hired seasonal labor.

### MILESTONES OF MOSHAV SETTLEMENT

The first two moshavim were founded in 1921, Mahalal in September in the northern Jezreel Valley and Kefar Yehezkel in December in the eastern part. Most of the members had formerly lived in kibbutzim (Degania, Kinneret, Hulda, and Merchavia). Within ten years another eight moshavim were founded, most of them in the Jezreel Valley. At the beginning of the 1930's, the movement was given a new impetus by widespread settlement in the Hefer Plain by the Hityashvut ha-Elef scheme, intended to settle 1,000 families on the land in the Sharon and Judea, and by the establishment of the first moshavim in the south. The landholdings were small compared with those of the first moshavim, as it was assumed that incomes would be supplemented and the farms consolidated by work outside the moshav in fruit groves and construction projects. During the Arab rebellion of 1936-39, more moshavim were established all over the country, especially in the valleys and in the south, as Stockade and Watchtower settlements. At the end of World War II, a number of moshavim were established by demobilized soldiers from the Jewish Brigade and other Jewish units in the British army. In 1948, when the State of Israel was established, there were 58 moshavim in the country.

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*This brief explanation and history of the Moshav is taken from the Encyclopedia Judaica and from a booklet, The Moshav in Israel, distributed by the World Zionist Organization.*

Most of the new immigrants who arrived in large numbers immediately after the establishment of the State differed in many respects from the pioneers who had settled on the land after spending years in training and preparation. They consisted mainly of families with many children, elderly persons, even entire communities brought over en masse. The moshav ovedim, with its family structure, was felt to be the only medium of settling these immigrants on the land. Hundreds of veterans from the older moshavim came forward to recruit new immigrants for settlements, to set up moshavim, and particularly to instruct and guide the new settlers. In the period 1949-56, 250 new moshavim were established. In 1970 there were 346 moshavim with a combined population of about 122,000.

#### ORGANIZATION OF THE MOSHAV

The society erects all the public buildings and installations including pumping installations, central irrigation network, supply stores, dairies, refrigeration and sorting plants, schools, clinics, and sports facilities. It finances its investments partly by direct taxation of members and partly by loans based on a general mutual guarantee by the members. The general assembly decides on the annual budget, composed of the local government budget (covered by direct taxes) and the administrative budget (covered partly by taxes and partly by levies on items of income and on various types of production outlays). In the 1960's the moshav set itself new goals: securing production rights in nationally planned branches of agriculture (dairy farming, poultry farming, orchards, etc.); the encouragement of new crops, notably for export purposes; and the protection of members' interests in taxation and social security. The expansion and social developments of the moshavim have given rise to the need for a legal basis for their life and activities. The draft Cooperative Societies Law submitted to the Knesset contains a special chapter dealing with the legal framework of the moshav. This is designed, in accordance with existing conditions, to safeguard established principles and ensure that the moshav and the moshav movement will continue to develop as an efficient and healthy unit of the national economy and society.

#### SERVICES TO THE MOSHAV

Moshav members receive all the national and local governmental services which are provided for all residents of Israel. In addition, they enjoy special services provided by the moshav itself, or by the regional organization of several villages - the regional council.

Some of these special services are provided for the moshav member in his own village; others are provided by a regional organization either in a neighboring moshav or in a rural center. The rural center is in itself a settlement which concentrates services for a group of surrounding settlements. These services include a school, dispensary, public meeting hall, and a variety of social and cultural programs. The rural center has its own residential area for the people employed in these various services.

Services within the Moshav: The services provided within the moshav itself are those that can be provided efficiently for a small population. These include: Educational services: Each moshav has a kindergarten, with its year of free education as part of the compulsory education system. Elementary education is provided either within the moshav, usually depending on its size, or jointly for several settlements on a regional basis.

Health services: All members of the moshav are covered by medical insurance which pays for health services. Usually there is a dispensary in each moshav, with a registered nurse on duty every day and regular visits by a physician.

Cultural and religious activities: In moshavim there is a club house where members may spend their free time reading or socializing with other members. Guest lecturers and artists are invited from time to time, and some moshavim have a public hall for this purpose. In most moshavim there is a local synagogue and in some of them other religious facilities such as a mikveh.

Commercial and personal services: Every moshav has a cooperative store where members can shop for food, home supplies and utensils, and dry goods.

#### THE MOSHAV AS AN EXAMPLE TO DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

In recent years the moshav and its way of life have attracted the interest of some leaders and many students from Asia, Africa, and Latin America. Thousands of them have gone to Israel to study the methods of the moshav, which they regard as a possible solution to the problems of organizing agriculture in their own countries. The moshav movement has been host to students and has organized study courses for them. It has also provided Israel's technical assistance program with many instructors to establish and advise settlements of the moshav type in these countries. Today there are scores of such settlements in Africa, Asia, and Latin America, with moshav members from Israel as instructors. The moshav movement, together with the Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs, has also established a volunteer movement for foreign service, and many young men from moshavim have served, and are serving, as volunteers in developing countries, living and working with the local population.

MORE MOSHAVNIKS THAN KIBBUTZNIKS  
By Peretz Kidron

DIRECT COMPARISONS

KIBBUTZ

MOSHAV

A full commune, where each gives what he can, and is cared for by the kibbutz, according to his needs.

A combination of independent units, operating at their own risk and for their own profit - with cooperation in some spheres.

Work is a social duty, done out of a feeling of social responsibility, with no tangible reward for extra effort or achievement.

The individual works directly for his own livelihood and that of his family. Extra achievement brings tangible material reward.

The only intangible incentive for hard work is social approval. Slackers are looked down upon.

Work incentives are exclusively personal and material.

Communal division of labor lightens the individual's burden, but discipline limits his freedom of action.

Each organizes his work as he thinks fit, but his freedom is limited by the heavier work load.

The main social and cultural unit is the community; social activity is at a relatively high level; lately there is also a tendency to greater emphasis on the family.

The family is the basic and most important unit; communal activity is usually very limited, or non-existent.

Communal education - responsibility for upbringing of children is shared between family and community; mostly children live in childrens' houses.

Children are brought up within the family. Community responsibility is restricted to the spheres of school and kindergarten.

Full social security; community cares for members, no limit to their claim on kibbutz resources in case of need (sickness, old age, etc.).

The individual relies on his own resources to carry him through difficulties, but there are also forms of mutual aid and insurance.

Goods and services supplied by kibbutz, equally to all or according to individual need. Communal setup limits individual choice.

Unrestricted private choice, limited only by the individual's means. No attempt at equality or help for exceptional cases or individual needs, except in a minority of moshavim where there is a higher degree of social cohesiveness and ideological motivation.

## HISTORY

In the tough pre-State days agricultural settlements were beset with almost insurmountable difficulties. Undrained marshes, rocky and eroded hills, bare sand dunes, Arab attacks. Under such circumstances the kibbutz, with its tight discipline, good organization and high degree of mutual trust and aid, proved far more effective than the moshav as a way of opening up new settlements.

At that time the challenge of agricultural settlement attracted the elite of Jewish youth, devoted and educated idealists with high ideological motivation. Such youngsters inclined to the kibbutz, which, in addition to its role in building up the Jewish state, also represented socialist ideals in action and offered the adventure of creating an entirely new form of society. Therefore kibbutzim comprised a majority of pre-State agricultural settlements. In 1948 there were 72 moshavim and 134 kibbutzim.

After the establishment of the State a new situation developed and radically changed the pattern of settlement. It was a period of mass aliya. Hundreds of thousands of immigrants from Asia, North Africa, and Eastern Europe poured into the country. Tens of thousands were living in transit camps under the most wretched conditions, subsisting on welfare handouts and wintering in army-surplus tents.

An obvious way of absorbing these people seemed to be to settle them on the land. But what kind of settlement? Kibbutz or moshav? It was then that some of the limitations of the kibbutz as an instrument of mass settlement became apparent. The ideologists were taken by surprise. The kibbutz, it turned out, was for the elite.

Many of the new settlers were poorly educated, often illiterate, without farming experience. The complexity of kibbutz life with its emphasis on a high level of ideological education and motivation created too many difficulties for them. The moshav, which limited cooperative arrangements to a number of restricted areas and preserved the traditional family unit, made adaptation much easier.

Within a decade the whole statistical picture of kibbutz and moshav population had been turned upside down. While there were twice as many kibbutz as moshav members in 1949, by 1959 the moshav population had overtaken and exceeded that of the kibbutz by some 20 per cent. This relationship more or less stabilized over the following decade.

## WHICH DO MOST PEOPLE CHOOSE TODAY?

"Neither," a veteran Israeli answered emphatically. "We Jews are an urbanized people. In the Diaspora, we congregate in and around the large towns - New York, London, Moscow, Paris. The same is true of the vast majority of Israeli Jews. The Jewish rural population of Israel is less than a quarter of a million - under

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*This article is excerpted from a longer piece, written by Peretz Kidron for Israel Magazine.*



ten per cent of the Jews in Israel. We haven't changed. New immigrants coming into the country, young couples setting up house - all prefer the three big cities, Jerusalem, Tel Aviv, Haifa. It's even a problem attracting newcomers to some of the smaller and more remote urban centers. After all," he added, a note of self-justification creeping into his voice, "it's not surprising - there's been a world-wide drift from country to town. The fact that we Jews reversed the trend even slightly is an achievement unparalleled by any other people."

Soft-spoken Moshe Pikarski, white-haired and tanned, was one of the founders of Moshav Herut. For the past fourteen years he has been running the Absorption Department of the Moshav Movement. Sitting in his room in the movement's brand-new Tel Aviv headquarters, he waved his hand towards the corridor where a row of candidates occupied a bench, waiting to be interviewed. "See for yourself," he said. "They wait in line here. We have lots of applicants - sometimes even a youngster who was born on a kibbutz and now wants to join a moshav. Why? All kinds of reasons - often he has a girl who doesn't want to join a kibbutz, while he doesn't want to go to town - so they settle for a moshav as a compromise." He was quick to forestall any accusation of fishing in someone else's backyard: "I don't encourage people to switch from kibbutz to moshav. I know the kibbutzim are short-handed and few people want to join. You should go and see how quiet it is at their offices..."

I went. And found just as long a line of prospective candidates - and this in the office of Hakibbutz Ha'Artzi of the leftish Hashomer Hatzair movement, which is only one of the three largest kibbutz federations. Here its Absorption Department deals only with individual applicants. The majority of kibbutz newcomers apply as groups, having graduated from youth movements in Israel and abroad. These do not come under the jurisdiction of the Absorption Department. I asked Haim Alon, head of the department, "How many immigrants choose a kibbutz, as compared with those choosing a moshav?" Haim - cool, organized and efficient, as befits a kibbutznik - brought out the Ministry of Absorption's monthly statistical reports. I picked out a couple at random: In October 1970, 253 immigrants joined kibbutzim, 99 joined moshavim. Three months later, in December, 205 to kibbutzim, 38 to moshavim.

#### WHY JOIN, WHY STAY?

Many join kibbutzim and moshavim but how many stay? Statistics are hard to come by. Immigrants joining a kibbutz retain their right to Jewish Agency housing and other aid for five years, to ensure a second chance for those who do not fit in. As a result, many immigrants join a kibbutz, are duly registered in official statistics - and then, just before the five-year period is up, they leave the kibbutz where they have acclimatized themselves and learned the language.

Moshe Pikarski added a further detail which blurs the statistics. "Look," he said, "people leave a moshav, go to town, get themselves fixed up with a job and an apartment - and wake up one day to find they've become small cogs in the big machine. Then they remember their days in the moshav, when they were independent - and lots of them throw up their jobs and fine apartments, and return home, to the moshav. That's the secret of the moshav - every man is his own master."

Why do some prefer the kibbutz? Batya works in the Kibbutz Artzi Absorption Department. "There are all kinds of reasons. Some are attracted by the economic security the kibbutz offers. There are many "half-families" - widowed or divorced men and women, who feel that the kibbutz way of bringing up children may be better for their own children. There are many of these, far more than the kibbutzim are capable of taking in, because each such case involves social and personal difficulties of all kinds."

Haim mentioned another way that children affect their parents' decision. "Many parents come to Israel for the children's sake. In deciding where to settle, they are disturbed by the idea of children living in children's houses, as they do on most kibbutzim. That is one of the reasons many olim prefer kibbutzim of the Ichud Federation, in many of which children sleep in the parents' apartment."

Joining a settlement is not the gateway to a life of ease. A farmer's life is never easy. Living standards have improved but are still quite low, especially in the newer villages. "We warn all our applicants," said Moshe, "that they'll have to work hard. They know they're only candidates to the moshav, that they have to fit in before they are accepted as permanent members. We try to screen all the applicants and not everyone is accepted."

Newcomers don't always fit into the kibbutz either. "There are many reasons," said Batya. "It's not an easy way of life to get used to, it's a tremendous change for most people. Communal living doesn't automatically solve all social problems; the kibbutz does not always open up to newcomers." She relates the case of a family which decided not to stay in the kibbutz they were sent to. "They gave us everything," the wife said, "but no one ever knocks on our door." Others come with over-idealized concepts of the kibbutz. "They don't really care about Israel - they immigrate to the kibbutz." Faced with the daily round of kibbutz life, their illusions are often shattered, and in their disappointment they often leave the kibbutz, and the country as well."

Haim's view is basically optimistic. "Kibbutzim get many applications they can't accept, through lack of housing for example. Things are easier in the moshavim, many of which are half-empty, with houses and farms awaiting settlers." Moshe denies this, except for some of the younger and more remote moshavim. In well-established moshavim, there are many cases of immigrants buying farms at prices ranging from IL 100,000 (\$30,000) to IL 250,000.

#### INDUSTRY COMES TO THE FARM

By the end of the Fifties when the moshav had overtaken and exceeded the kibbutz in population, large-scale immigration had ceased. The immigrants arriving then showed little inclination for agricultural settlement. Jewish rural population doubled in the Fifties, increased only 14 per cent in the Sixties. The slowdown was common to both moshav and kibbutz.

But a significant development occurred in the Fifties. Previously, agricultural settlements had been just that - farming communities. But as settlers became skilled farmers and invested part of their income, with Jewish Agency loans, in improved equipment, production rose dramatically. So did efficiency; it soon

became evident that production could be kept up and even increased, while the labor force diminished. There was a need for further sources of employment and income, and the settlers sought ways to meet the problem. Each form of settlement went about it in its own way. Kibbutzim and some moshavim set up factories, producing everything from teak furniture and TV sets to plastics and machinery, while other moshavim went about it in a more individualistic manner - many moshavniks took on jobs in nearby towns, leaving the farm to be worked by the wife and children or hired labor, with the husband helping out when he came home from the factory. In Moshav Gilat, out of 87 families only 40 rely on agriculture alone for their livelihood.

It is hard as yet to assess the full significance of this development for the future. Clearly, modern industry, with its demands for highly trained technicians, will create openings for a new kind of settler who will combine village life with the income and educational requirements associated with the city.

Already, kibbutz emissaries going abroad to attract new members are being given lists of professions the kibbutzim need: from teachers and nurses to industrial scientists and engineers. A complex, sophisticated form of society is evolving - a far cry from the settlers of Nahalal, the first moshav, who, early in the Twenties, declared: "We aspire to settle as small farmers on Jewish National Fund land, and set up farms to supply all our needs - from bread, vegetables and fruit, to milk, eggs, honey and meat. In addition, we will get some of our clothes from the wool of the sheep we shall raise..." (From Nahalalim by Shmuel Dayan, late father of the Minister of Defense and one of the founders of Nahalal and the Moshav Movement.)

#### TRENDS

What does the immediate future hold? Both moshav and kibbutz are undergoing important internal changes as they face the challenges of the Seventies and Eighties. Well established now, the chief question is that of the third and fourth generations. With the original colonizing impetus gone, will Israel's farmers be caught up in the world-wide drift to town? Many moshav and kibbutz born youngsters are attracted by the bright lights, but the majority stay on the land - either in their own homes or in new settlements. A few settlements, both moshavim and kibbutzim, have suffered a disastrously high rate of defectors among the younger generation.

But there are far more settlements where the young people have decided not only to stay but, by "marrying out" and triumphantly bringing their spouses home with them, have significantly increased the population. (There are often very tense situations when a boy from one settlement marries a girl from another. The ensuing tug-of-war to decide on their future home is anxiously followed by the entire population of both settlements, who tend to regard it as a kind of sporting contest.)

The new settlements set up most recently show a renewed trend towards the moshav, though this is not always evident, for a kibbutz-like form is adopted by a moshav in the early years, when conditions are difficult. This does not

necessarily conflict with the Ministry of Absorption figures showing more immigrants settling on kibbutzim. Most of these new moshav settlers are the younger sons of moshav members, who, not being able to look forward to inheriting the family farm, since first sons get first refusal, are therefore forced to join a new settlement if they want to stay in farming. Young kibbutzniks do not face the same problem as the "one man, one unit" moshavniks. In new moshavim, 60 per cent of settlers are sons of older established settlements, striking out for themselves.

The young Israelis settling in moshavim now seem to be attracted by the independence and individualism of the moshavnik's life. Many of them, more than at any previous time, are religious, and seek ways to foster the family in accordance with tradition.

There are also significant changes within the kibbutz. Side by side with its basic collectivist setup, there is growing stress on individuality and personal satisfaction. One instance of this is the dramatic increase in the number of kibbutzniks studying at academic institutions, which has reached such heights that there is serious talk of founding a kibbutz university. This change is beginning to attract a new kind of member; a young professional joining a kibbutz nowadays is likely to find a wide circle of university graduates with whom a common language is soon created.

#### AND THE EIGHTIES?

It would be rash to predict the more distant future. True, there is no lack of prophets who foretell the approaching end of Israel's farm cooperative. The members themselves tend to ignore such gloomy prognoses, which are usually dictated by a dislike for the socialist character of both forms, especially the kibbutz.

Both kibbutz and moshav have triumphantly proved their viability. It would be hard to imagine present-day Israel without their vital contribution. Will they continue to grow?

Economically, both forms have proved strikingly successful, with great achievements in all fields. Both can offer their members a good standard of living but problems remain in the social sphere. In the moshav, the younger generation of sabras is better educated and demands more of a social and cultural life than the moshav can offer at present. In the kibbutz, the younger members are seeking more individual satisfaction, together with continued ideological motivation in the kibbutz's role in Israeli society. If these problems are solved, it seems likely that the young people will stay, and attract newcomers from outside.

What seems certain is that the kibbutz and moshav of 2001 will be as unlike those of the present day as they in turn differ from their predecessors of 30 years ago. Israel is a land of constant and dramatic change.

SUGGESTED READING LIST FOR FURTHER STUDY ON THE TOPIC

Moledeth, A Study of the Moshav Shitufi

*By Lionel Freitelberg*

A Walden Two Experiment

*By Kathleen Kinkade*

*About Twin Oaks commune, a kibbutz like community*

Jewish Radicalism

*By Jack Nusan Porter and Peter Dreier*

Communes of the Counterculture

*By Keith Melville*

Commitment and Community

*By Rosabeth Moss Kanter*

Immigrants to Freedom

*By Joseph Brandeis*

*Deals with Jewish communal farming in America*

The Kibbutz: A New Way of Life

*By Dan Leon*

Kibbutz: A New Society

*Ichud Habonim, Tel Aviv*

*Can be obtained through Maskirut Artzit*

What is Kibbutz?

*By Muki Tsur*

*Can be obtained through Maskirut Artzit*

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